

# DEEP-FLOWING BROOK

THE STORY OF  
JOHANN  
SEBASTIAN

# BACH

by MADELEINE B. GOSS  
*Illustrated by* ELINORE BLAISDELL



*The Story of Johann Sebastian Bach*

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*Illustrated by Elmore Blaisdell*

Although the Bach household already numbered five sons and two daughters there was great rejoicing over the birth of Johann Sebastian. In a family important to music for nearly two hundred years he might prove to be the greatest musician of all.

Indeed, from his earliest years Sebastian seemed to show more talent and love for music than any of his brothers or cousins. Left an orphan at the age of ten, Sebastian went to live with his brother, where he began the study of several instruments as well as harmonic theory and other principles of music. When forbidden access to a manuscript volume of works by famous organists, he crept from his bed and copied the volume by moonlight, injuring his eyesight so severely that he became totally blind in the last years of his life.

In this fascinating biography of Johann Sebastian Bach the reader also becomes intimately acquainted with three generations of musical Bachs. But above all, *DEEP-FLOWING BROOK* is the story of the famous musician and composer, who came to be known as "the master of masters" and whose works inspired so many of the great composers who followed him.

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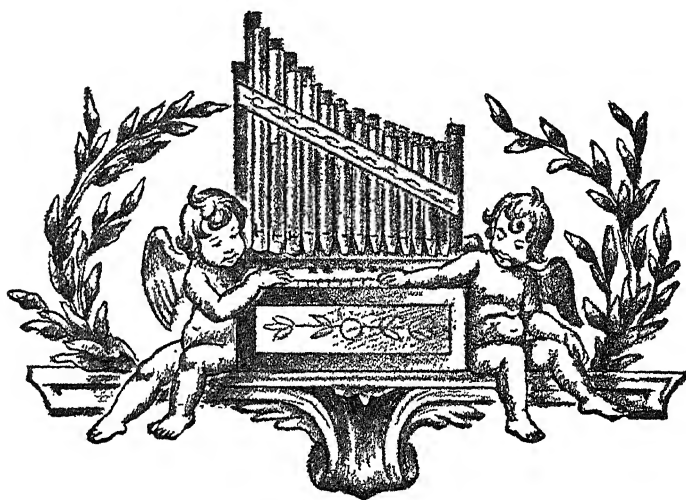
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TO THE MEMORY OF  
MY HUSBAND





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## DEEP-FLOWING BROOK





## CHAPTER I

### *"Here There is Music"*

**T**HANKS be to Thee . . . *Herr Gott!*"

From the half-open doors of the St. Georgenkirche the music of the vesper service drifted into the streets of Eisenach. Candles glimmered through the dusk, and the first warm breeze of spring filled the twilight with sweet scents from the Thuringian forest.

Johann Ambrosius Bach knelt in the shadows of the church and gave thanks for the safe arrival of his new-born son.

March 21st, 1685. . . .

Fourteen years now since Ambrosius had moved to Eisenach. First Arnstadt, then Erfurt, and now Eisenach. It was singular how the Bachs held to their native province of Thuringia in Germany. Six generations of them had lived and died there; and always they were musicians. Ambrosius thought of this as he listened to the deep tones of the organ, and wondered if his new son would follow the family tradition.

The clock in the church tower struck seven. Johann Ambrosius slipped out of the St. Georgenkirche and hurried down to the Lutherstrasse towards his home. He passed across the Esplanade, where the new leaves of the linden trees were beginning to swell, and started up the steep, cobbled street of the Frauenplan.

Suddenly a voice at his elbow made him start.

"Why so fast, Brother?"

Ambrosius looked up in surprise. For a moment he could have imagined that he was looking at his own reflection in a mirror. He burst out into a shout of delighted laughter.

"Brother Christoph!" he cried, "is it really *you* I see?"

Johann Christoph embraced him with a hearty laugh. "You did not think to see your twin brother at this time,—now did you, my Ambrosius? Six long months since you came to see us in Arnstadt! And all



of a sudden yesterday, I had the feeling: I must go to Eisenach!"

Ambrosius looked at him with emotion. "Strange the tie that binds us, Christoph. You recall last year when you were stricken with the fever, and I, here in Eisenach, suffered with the same complaint?"

"Aye," his brother answered as they climbed up the Frauenplan together. "It has always been thus."

"But today," Ambrosius went on proudly, "it is an auspicious occasion that brings us together. Elisabeth has given birth to a new son!"

Christoph exclaimed at the news. "Is it possible!! *Ach*, Ambrosius, you go too fast for me! Five sons now, not counting the little one that died, and two daughters. While I," he continued ruefully, "have only my little Johann Ernst. Will this new son of yours be a musician too?"

Ambrosius laughed. "What else, pray, should he be? Do not all of our family have music in their blood?" He poked Christoph playfully in the ribs. "I only hope the appointments last until he grows up! Thuringia is full of Bachs—and all engaged in music! Here in Eisenach, Cousin Johann Christoph has the post of organist, and *I* am Town-Musician. At Arnstadt it is Cousin Heinrich and yourself. Then there

is Cousin Michael in Gehren—and Georg Christoph—and Nikolaus—”

He stopped for breath. They had now reached the quaint, red-tiled house of the Bachs. Over the timbered doorway a candle shone through the latticed window. Ambrosius left his brother in the raftered hall and hastened up the winding stairs to the little room above. He opened the door softly.

“Elisabet . . . !”

A huge four-poster bed almost filled the narrow room. By its side, close to Elisabet’s hand, stood a small, rudely carved cradle which Ambrosius himself had fashioned, years before. Seven times already Elisabet had rocked a new baby in this cradle, and sung soft melodies to music-destined souls.

“Brother Christoph is here,” Ambrosius told his wife. “And about the christening, everything is arranged. Sebastian Nagel and Johann Georg Koch will stand sponsors.”

Elisabet nodded. “Sebastian,” she murmured. “It is a good name. I suppose you will put in the Johann too!” She laughed. “You Bachs!—always there must be Johann before your names. But what is going on outside?”

From the shadows of the street below came a chorus of fresh young voices.

Ambrosius went to the casement and threw the

latticed window wide. A rush of singing filled the little room.

"It is the boys of the Currende Choir," he called to his wife. "They are come to welcome our new-born son."

Since before the days of Luther the Currende Choir had been singing through the streets of Eisenach. "*Isenacum*" was the Latin name for the city, and of this the worthy burghers had made an anagram: "*En Musica*"—"Here there is Music!" It was an appropriate watchword, for here indeed music was a part of the life of every man. When a new citizen was born, and afterwards on every important occasion of his life, and finally when he went to his last rest, the sweet voices of the Currende Choir boys wished him "Welcome," "Good Fortune," and "God-speed." Two centuries earlier the great Luther himself had marched with the Currende.

Ambrosius and Elisabet listened gratefully. Outside it had grown quite dark. The candle on the window ledge wavered in the breeze and flickered out; a new moon was dropping low in the western sky.

Little Sebastian smiled in his sleep as if he too heard the music.

. . . . .

Ambrosius Bach's youngest son grew rapidly into a sturdy, healthy child. Of all the seven children he most resembled his father, and it was perhaps for this reason that he was the favorite. Or perhaps it was because he showed such a deep feeling for music. The other children took music as a matter of course; it was an accepted part of their daily life. But little Sebastian from his earliest months would plainly manifest enjoyment whenever anyone played or sang to him.

"Ambrosius, your fiddle!" the distracted Elisabeth often called when every other means had failed to quiet the new baby's crying. Ambrosius—secretly pleased—would tuck his violin beneath his chin and play a lilting melody. Suddenly, with tears still streaming down his cheeks, little Sebastian would cease his cries. Then his father would throw him up in the air and cry exultantly: "He will be the greatest Bach of all, Elisabeth!"

As Sebastian grew older his brothers, Johann Christoph and Johann Balthasar, would half carry, half drag him with them up the steep hill to the old castle of Wartburg. Then they would tell him exciting stories about the ancient minstrels and the tourneys of song that had been held long ago at the Wartburg. Here, years before, Luther had lived—the great reformer of the German church. They showed

him the room where Luther wrote the German Bible and composed the stirring hymn-tunes of the Reformation. Eisenach was full of such fascinating memories and traditions.

Sometimes, on these excursions, little Sebastian would suddenly hear a bird singing overhead. Then everything else was forgotten. He would listen intently, and try to reproduce the song in his sweet treble voice. If he succeeded he would hurry back to sing it to his father.

There was always music at the Bachs' home. Every evening Ambrosius would pick up his violin, reach for some music and call to the others to join him. Sebastian was eager to take part in these family concerts; he could hardly wait until he should be old enough.

He had a passion for all music, but best of anything he loved the organ at the St. Georgenkirche. He would steal up into the loft, climb on the bench beside Cousin Johann Christoph, and watch intently as the old man played; or he would sit quietly in the church and listen with head thrown back in ecstasy to the mighty tones that floated down.

Whenever Elisabet was unable to find her youngest son, she knew where to seek for him. "Johann Jakob! Sebastian is not here, and it is time for the

noon meal. Run down to the St. Georgenkirche and fetch him home.”

. . . . .

“*Careful*, Sebastian! You will ruin my cakes if you open the oven door every five minutes!” Elisabeth dragged her five-year-old son away from the huge brick stove. Now for the first time Sebastian was old enough to participate in the yearly reunion of the family, and he wanted to help; but Elisabeth shoved him gently through the doorway of the little kitchen on the half-landing.

“Juditha, take your brother and the two small cousins, Johann Ernst and Heinrich, out into the garden,—anywhere so that they will no longer drive me to distraction . . . !”

Juditha, five years older than Sebastian, marshaled her young brother and the two visiting cousins together, and started down the stairs.

The red-tiled house of Ambrosius was filled with unusual bustle and activity. Savory odors of roasting meats and spicy cakes drifted from the kitchen where Elisabeth, assisted by the serving-maid and her elder daughter, Maria Salome, prepared a sumptuous feast for the gathering clan.

On the floor below, the three apprentices, who were studying with Ambrosius to become professional musicians, were busily at work. They carefully

cleaned the large store-room and placed long tables down its center with benches on either side. The rafters above were hung with greens from the forest.

Sebastian tugged impatiently at Juditha's hand and longed to investigate each new activity. "Why do they need so many benches?" he asked.

"And why have they brought the clavier and the harpsichord down from the apprentices' room?" added seven-year-old Johann Ernst.

"Don't you understand?" Juditha answered from her superior wisdom of ten years. "It is the 'family day'—the great reunion, this evening. All the Bachs are to be here. Even the cousins from Schweinfurt are coming—there'll be dozens! But only the men are to take part in the festival this evening. Brother Johann Christoph will be here, but not boys like you and Jakob and Johann Ernst."

Sebastian cried, "But they will have *music*!"

"Of course!" Juditha laughed. "That is why they gather every year. No one else can make music like the Bachs! Why, only last week Duke Johann Georg told Father that our family had changed the whole standing of musicians in this country! And it's true. The Guild of Musicians have never before been so much looked up to as they are now. It was only a few years ago that they were regarded as no better than servants. And it is the Bach family—

all the brothers and uncles and grandfathers who compose and play—who have changed people's opinion!"

Sebastian fingered the harpsichord wistfully. "I wish *I* could hear the music!" He looked around the room, his sharp eyes finally noting the space beneath the big table; then joined the others at the window where they were watching for brother Johann Christoph, who was on his way home from Ohrdruf.

. . . . .

"A toast, Johann Michael!" Ambrosius cried.

The long meal was finally at an end, and Elisabet, with a sigh of relief, beckoned to the apprentices to fill the glasses and clear away the remains of the food.

"A toast?" Michael lifted his glass high. "Let us drink to the eldest son of our Ambrosius. Young Johann Christoph has been appointed organist at St. Michael's church in Ohrdruf!"

Everyone crowded about Johann Christoph and congratulated him. Old Heinrich Bach patted him genially on the back. "The great Pachelbel will be pleased," he said with pride; "he told me last week in Erfurt that you were one of his most promising pupils. And now may we not have some music?"

The yearly reunion of the Bach relationship always began with a sacred chorus, and this evening they sang first a chorale composed by old Heinrich Bach then another by Cousin Johann Christoph, organist of



Eisenach. Presently Nikolaus, the latter's eldest son, showed them a new lute-harpsichord that he had recently invented. Many of the Bachs were noted for their cleverness in constructing musical instruments.

By now the women and children had drifted off towards bed, and the men were alone, ready to begin the serious business of the evening—the singing of a Quodlibet or “free-for-all” part-song. Old Heinrich, the eldest Bach present, started the song rolling with a popular tune of the day. He was followed by Cousin Johann Christoph, who intoned one of his well-known church motets with mock solemnity. Then came Michael, singing a rollicking beer-song; and the others chimed in, each in his turn, with a different tune. The result should have been bedlam, but this extraordinary clan of men understood the art of harmonizing so thoroughly that the various melodies blended into a chorus of surprising beauty—though sometimes the results were comical. Johann Christoph would find himself chanting lugubriously: “The joy of our heart is ceased, woe unto us that we have sinned,” while next to him Nikolaus shouted: “Hail to the joys of Wine and Beer!”

Suddenly Johann Michael gave a start and ducked beneath the table, to drag forth a small, squirming boy. Ambrosius, his mouth wide open for a high E, stopped singing abruptly. Then the rafters

shook with mirth, and Ambrosius' scoldings were drowned out as Michael lifted the boy bodily to the center of the table.

"*Now* then, young culprit,—what have you to say for yourself?"

Sebastian hardly knew whether to laugh or to cry.

"Since you are so anxious to join our celebration, suppose you give us some music yourself!"

Ambrosius, persuaded by his brother and the high good humor of the others to be lenient with his son, gave him an encouraging nod. "Sebastian has a fair voice," he said with pride. "Soon now he will be singing with the Currende Choir."

Sebastian felt a warm sense of clanship with these jolly Bachs. He thought of the stories he had heard of old Veit, his great-great-grandfather, the miller who sang as he ground his meal or played merrily on his lute; and of Hans the Spielmann, the gay fiddler of Wechmar; and of all these others sitting around him. Some day *he* would be a great musician too. . . .

Perched high on the table, he sang fearlessly in his sweet treble voice.

"He has exceptional talent for a five-year-old," Johann Michael exclaimed to Ambrosius. "Soon you will be making a full-fledged musician of him, I sup-

pose. Wait—I had almost forgotten. . . .” He went out into the brick-floored hallway and brought back a package that he had hidden behind the stairs. “See, Sebastian, I have a gift for you!” He held up a beautifully fashioned half-size violin.

Sebastian’s eyes shone with delight. Now he could play with the others! “Is it really for me?” he cried. “For me alone?”

Cousin Michael winked at him. “Haven’t I made one for each of your brothers? And why shouldn’t it be your turn now? Besides, Maria Barbara”—he was speaking of his favorite daughter—“has a fiddle just like this, and she is not much older than you are!”

Maria Barbara! Sebastian had never seen his small cousin, though he had heard a great deal about her. The sound of her name was like music. He said it over to himself softly: “Ma-ri-a Barbara. . . .”



## CHAPTER II

### *Twice Orphaned*

SEBASTIAN stood before his mother with the dignity of eight full years. His short stocky figure was clothed in the uniform of the "Gymnasium"—the word did not mean what our "gymnasium" does, but was the name given to boys' schools in Germany—and under his arm he carried his new schoolbooks. Johann Jakob had started to school two years before, and now it was Sebastian's turn.

"So you too are leaving me, Sebastian," Elisabet exclaimed as she kissed him. "Now I have no sons left!"

Of the six sons that she had brought into the

world three slept in the little churchyard of Eisenach, and Johann Christoph, the eldest, was long since established at Ohrdruf.

Sebastian reassured her promptly and cheerfully. "Oh, but I'll be coming home every night, Mother. And I'm going to work *so* hard! You just wait and see—before the term is over I mean to catch up with brother Jakob!"

"Such ambition!" Elisabet sighed with an affectionate smile at the boy. She had no strength these days; some obscure ailment weighed her down. Maria Salome and Juditha did their best to relieve her, but Sebastian was his mother's greatest comfort. She could hardly bear to have him out of her sight.

Sebastian started off to school with eager haste. He was already well advanced, thanks to Elisabet's teaching at home, and he looked forward especially to singing in the Currende Choir—a privilege granted to the best singers in the Gymnasium. There was no doubt about his joining them, for he had an unusually true, sweet voice, and through his father's direction was well grounded in part-singing and the elements of music. He could even, when necessary, accompany the Choir on the violin or the viola.

In his school work he advanced with equal rapidity. By the end of the first term he had not only caught up with his brother Jakob, three years his

senior, but even stood one place above him. Together they studied the Catechism and the Psalms, Bible History and the beginnings of Latin. By Easter of the following spring, Sebastian was promoted to a still higher class. He could hardly wait to tell his mother the glad news.

"*Liebe Mutter!*" he cried, hurrying up the narrow stairway to the little room above the entrance. "Didn't I *tell* you? Herr Dedekind has recommended me for 'Quarta'!"

Elisabet, lying in the great four-poster bed, exclaimed with pride at her son's achievement. For several months now she had not been able to leave her room, and had had to let Maria Salome manage the household—no easy task for a seventeen-year-old girl, even though Juditha helped. Having Sebastian near always made Elisabet feel happier, and he often brought his books home from the Gymnasium and studied at her bedside. Elisabet was trying to keep from her husband the knowledge of how seriously ill she was; for Ambrosius was already sadly depressed by the recent death of his twin-brother. Indeed, he was never the same afterwards: his gay, laughter-loving nature seemed completely changed. He would sit for hours, silent and brooding, by his wife's side, or wander aimlessly through the Eisenach streets.

On May 1st, 1694, Duke Johann Georg announced a public festival. The court had been in mourning for several years, and the picturesque castle fronting the Market Place had held itself aloof from all festivities. Now the mourning was at an end, and Duke Johann planned to give the people of Eisenach a rousing celebration.

For weeks the little town was filled with preparations. The Currende Choir practiced diligently; the town musicians learned new tunes; and even the women and children helped by bringing in large baskets full of flowers for garlands to hang across the narrow streets. The Market Place was transformed into a scene of festive revelry. Wandering peddlers set up their booths around the square and decorated them with flowers and many-colored flags. In the center, long tables awaited the evening feast which the Duke had promised to his people.

At daybreak of the eventful day, the choir marched through the streets singing May songs and spring roundelays. Then the whole town repaired to the St. Georgenkirche for a service of thanksgiving.

All through the day the townsfolk made merry, and towards evening the fun waxed fast and furious. Torches illuminated the gay Market Place and great barrels of freshly brewed beer flowed in an apparently unending stream. The tables were cleared away, and

the musicians began to play vigorous dance music for the eager crowds.

Sebastian and Jakob watched the scene with mingled emotions. It was hard to be sad in the midst of so much gaiety, yet their hearts were filled with anxiety for their mother. Elisabet had seemed very weak the past few days. Ambrosius took no part in the festivities. He was obliged to be present because of his position as *Hof-Musicus* (Court Musician); but he stood to one side, preoccupied, directing his musicians only when necessary.

The orchestra had just begun a rousing polka, when Ambrosius felt a hand touch his sleeve. He turned to find Juditha beside him, crying hysterically.

"Come quickly, Father," she sobbed. "Sebastian and Jakob, too. Mother is ever so much worse—I'm frightened. She is calling for all of you. . . ."

At daybreak of the third of May, 1694, Elisabet Bach passed to her rest.

. . . . .

The months following Elisabet's death were sad ones. Maria Salome tried to manage the motherless household, but Juditha was just turned fourteen—a heedless madcap of a girl, Sebastian and Jakob were both still in school, and their father was the greatest problem of all.

The loss of his wife, coming so soon after the



death of his beloved twin brother, had completely broken Ambrosius. All the efforts of his friends and family failed to lift his depression. Even Duke Johann Georg's sympathy had no apparent effect, though he even sent his court artist to paint a portrait of Ambrosius, thinking by this honor to distract him.

Maria Salome finally sent a letter to her brother Johann Christoph in Ohrdruf, and begged him to come to them. "I fear," she wrote, "that unless Father is roused from this black melancholy he will not long survive our beloved mother."

It was Juditha who first saw him when he hastened home. She ran down to open the door, and threw her arms about his neck.

"Where is Father?" he asked at once.

Juditha took him upstairs to the large apprentices' room where Ambrosius was sitting for his portrait. At his back an open window disclosed a distant view of the Wartburg hill and castle. He sat before a table, his eyes filled with melancholy resignation. But what impressed Johann Christoph most was the careless disorder of his father's attire. Ambrosius had not troubled to put on the heavy wig of elaborately curled gray hair which he always wore on ceremonial occasions, or his court costume of satin and lace. His right hand was outstretched, half open—an unconscious gesture that seemed to say: "What

have I left to live for?" These details more than anything he might have said made Johann Christoph realize the sad state of his father's mind.

Ambrosius' face brightened when he saw his eldest son. For the first time in five months he almost smiled.

"I have come to bring you news, Father," Johann Christoph said after the first greetings had been exchanged. "Next month I'm going to marry Dorothea von Hofe, of Ohrdruf—the daughter of the Rathsherr there."

Ambrosius congratulated his son, but it was with evident effort, and almost at once he relapsed into his melancholy. The younger man, worried by his father's appearance, suddenly decided to broach an idea he had for some time had in mind.

"Father—" Johann Christoph hesitated. "Father—don't you think it would be a good thing if you were to marry again?"

Ambrosius looked at him in somber surprise.

"It is only right that you should," his son persisted. "And why not? Didn't your uncle Johannes take for his second wife the aunt of our own dear mother Elisabet? And cousin Johann Christoph, and his brother Aegidius—haven't they all married again? We Bachs—" he clapped an affectionate hand on his father's shoulder— "we need a woman in the house!"

Ambrosius shook his head wearily. "I don't want another wife. Maria Salome can look after the house."

"But that is not right!" Johann Christoph interrupted. "Maria Salome is over-young to manage such a household as this. Think of the apprentices! And Sebastian and Jakob—they need a mother's care still."

Ambrosius made no reply. But Johann Christoph noted that evening that his father's glance rested frequently on Maria Salome with a questioning, almost bewildered expression.

. . . . .

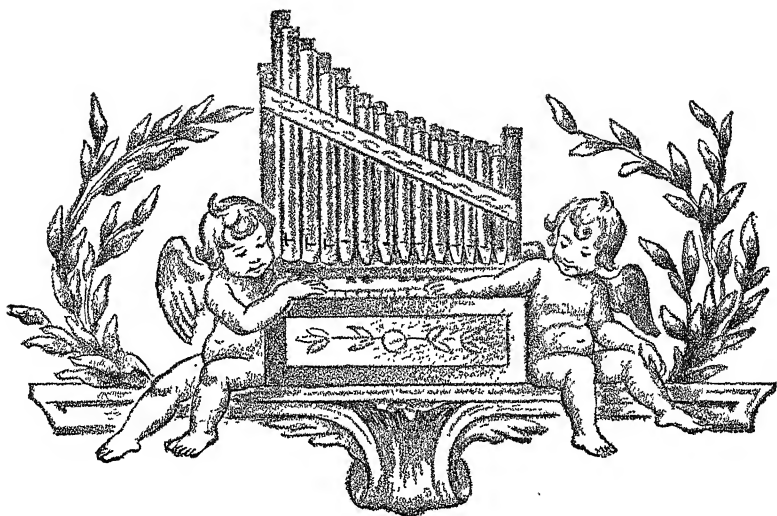
Two months later Ambrosius followed his son's advice and brought home a new bride, daughter of the burgomaster of Arnstadt, Barbara Margaretha Keul. She was comely and well dowered, and had already been twice widowed. In a way she seemed to belong to the family, for her first husband had been Johann Günther Bach, son of old Heinrich. She tried her best to bring order to the household, and to win over her new husband's children. But it was not an easy task.

Sebastian resented his stepmother's presence bitterly. To see her sitting at his own mother's place at the table, and occupying the great four-poster bed that was sacred to Elisabet's memory,—these were terrible offenses in his young eyes. In spite of his

father's admonitions he obstinately refused to admit Dame Barbara Margaretha's authority. He began to stay away from home as much as possible; to take long walks through the forest and to neighboring villages.

Nor was Ambrosius any happier for the change. Gradually the melancholy of the past year's mourning returned to him, deeper than ever. For a few weeks longer he fought against it. Then, two months after the new marriage, Ambrosius gave up the struggle and followed Elisabet and his twin brother to the grave.

Johann Sebastian Bach, not yet ten years of age, was left twice orphaned.



### CHAPTER III

#### *Brother Johann Christoph*

PLEASE . . . !" Sebastian's voice trembled as he spoke. "*Please*, Johann Christoph, don't make me stay here with Dame Barbara Margaretha! I could not stand it now that Father is gone. Besides, I *won't* stay here. I'll run away first!"

Johann Christoph had come down from Ohrdruf to settle the affairs of the family. He sat in the apprentices' room sorting over his father's papers. The three apprentices had already been dismissed, and the

future of the household must be decided. Finally he laid the papers aside. "Sebastian," he said severely, "you are not fair to Dame Barbara Margaretha. All she wants is to be a loving mother to you. However, if you and Jakob prefer, you may come and live with us at Ohrdruf." Christoph knew that his young bride, Dorothea, would welcome the plan.

Sebastian threw his arms around Johann Christoph's neck. "*Ach, lieber Bruder*, thou art kind!" he cried with tears in his eyes. So Sebastian and Jakob packed up their few belongings and traveled back with their brother.

Johann Christoph held a position of high esteem in Ohrdruf. St. Michael's church, which had been served by several generations of Bachs, had never had a more efficient organist, for Christoph had learned his art from the great Pachelbel, one of the finest composers and organ-players of the day.

The move was a fortunate one for Sebastian. His brother gave him lessons on the clavier, instruction in harmony, and a thorough mastery of all the elements of music. Later he taught him the use of the organ. Already, before coming to Ohrdruf, the boy had had training from his father in the playing of string instruments. Now he worked with such ardor at all the exercises that were set him that his brother was amazed at the rapidity with which his young pupil advanced.

The boy was indefatigable. He would get so engrossed in his work—especially if he were studying or copying some new composition—that Dame Dorothea often worried about his health, for she was sincerely fond of her husband's youngest brother.

Johann Christoph did not altogether approve of the speed with which Sebastian sailed ahead. Especially in composition he felt that a more thorough groundwork should be laid before the secrets of higher counterpoint could be mastered. Sebastian, on the contrary, wanted to absorb everything regardless of its difficulty. His brother owned a book of bound manuscripts—a collection of music by the greatest composers of the day, Pachelbel and Buxtehude, Böhm and Reinken, and other celebrated masters; but Johann Christoph considered these compositions too difficult for Sebastian to study.

“But won't you just let me try them over?” the boy begged.

Johann Christoph sternly refused. “You are not ready yet, Sebastian. Go on for a while with the two-part fugues I have set you. Do you think you're ready for dessert when you haven't yet finished your soup?”

Sebastian did not reply, but he was an obstinate boy, and he thought to himself: if he could only in some way get hold of the volume he would soon show

his brother whether or not the works were too difficult! But Johann Christoph kept the book in a locked cupboard. What to do?

One night Sebastian could not sleep for thinking of the forbidden book of manuscript music. Suddenly a thought struck him. The full moon shone into his room through the little window at the foot of his bed. Jakob, beside him, was sound asleep. Sebastian rose very softly without waking his brother and crept down the stairs in his bare feet.

The house was very still. The clock at the top of the castle tower struck twice, and the moon shone full on the latticed cupboard where Johann Christoph kept the music-book.

Sebastian had small hands for a ten-year-old. He reached through the narrow lattice and began to roll up the manuscript. After several attempts he succeeded in drawing it through, then carried it over to the window to examine his prize.

The music was even more fascinating than he had imagined. His eyes read through the pieces greedily, and he longed to try them over on his brother's harpsichord. Finally he got a pencil and began copying down bits that caught his fancy. Soon, however, the moon went down, and Sebastian could no longer see to write. He replaced the manuscript and went shivering back to his bed.



Each night after that when the moon shone, he rose as soon as the household was asleep and went on with his copying. It was long and wearisome work. Months went by, and Sebastian thought he would never come to the end of his task. His eyes rebelled against the strain, and the cold and lack of sleep began to tell upon his physical condition.

"What ails Sebastian?" Dorothea exclaimed to her husband one morning. "He has not seemed himself for weeks now. He complains of his eyes, and he has no appetite or gaiety; in the morning I can hardly get him out of bed."

Johann Christoph began to observe his young brother closely. He noticed that Sebastian's spells seemed always to fall at the time of the full moon. Finally one night he set himself to watch.

Hardly had Sebastian filched the manuscript from the latticed cupboard and begun his moonlight copying before a shadow rose accusingly before him.

*"Sebastian! What is the meaning of this?"*

The boy gave a start of alarm, and then burst into tears.

"You have disobeyed me," Johann Christoph exclaimed severely. "You have risked your health and your eyesight to do this. Give me those sheets."

Sebastian handed him the manuscript with deep reluctance. Six months of patient labor! He looked

at his brother with pleading eyes. But Johann Christoph had no pity on him, and years passed before Sebastian saw his precious manuscript again.

. . . . .

Ohrdruf was a quiet village about thirty miles southeast of Eisenach. On its west rose the wooded hills of the Thuringian Forest, and through the little town flowed the shallow Ohra from which the village took its name.

Shortly after Sebastian and Jakob came to live with their brother they were entered in the old *Klosterschule*, or Lyceum, of Ohrdruf—one of the best in Thuringia, attracting pupils from many of the neighboring towns. In earlier days it had been destroyed by fire and rebuilt several times; in 1695, when Sebastian came to Ohrdruf, the school numbered close to three hundred students.

Two other Bachs were already enrolled there—Johann Ernst, twelve years old, and his brother Johann Heinrich, three years younger; their mother, the widow of Ambrosius' twin brother, lived in Arnstadt. Though Johann Ernst, who had always been Sebastian's favorite cousin, was two years his senior, and already in *Tertia*, or Third Form, Sebastian worked with such diligence that he was soon promoted into the same class with his cousin and his brother Jakob.

Here they came under the direction of the tyrant

Heinrich Arnold, who was master of *Tertia* and leader of the Lyceum choir.

"I suppose that just because you happen to be born a Bach you consider yourself a musician!" this master growled at Sebastian, eyeing the boy scornfully.

But Sebastian knew how much everyone in the school disliked Cantor Arnold, and how badly Johann Ernst had already suffered from the man's bullying; and he made up his mind that he, for one, would not submit to such treatment. He looked Herr Arnold fearlessly in the eye. "I stood at the head of the Currende Choir in Eisenach," he answered calmly.

The Cantor's face wore a savage scowl. "So . . . you are very sure of yourself, *Herr Hof-Musicus!* Just because your family has a reputation, you Bachs think you should be at the head of every musical organization. Well, I don't play favorites here—get that into your head!"

At this, Sebastian's fists began to double up. Herr Arnold saw the gesture and reached for his cane.

Sebastian controlled himself. "Why should you whip me?" he asked quietly. "I have done nothing!"

Herr Arnold advanced in a rage. "Done nothing! You insolent brat! Do you dare talk back to me?" He lifted his cane savagely. But at that mo-

ment Herr Kiesewetter, the "Rector" or head of the school, came into the room.

"What is all this fuss about?" he asked severely.

Herr Arnold's arm dropped, and he was all submission. "Nothing—nothing, *Herr Direktor*," he exclaimed, rubbing his hands together. "Just another case of insurrection. Very sad—very sad!"

"There is to be no caning in this school without just and sufficient cause," Herr Kiesewetter continued in a stern voice. "And I prefer to have such cases brought to my personal attention."

This was the beginning of a long feud between Sebastian and his new master. Fortunately Herr Kiesewetter took an interest in the boy, and the Rector's protection helped him to endure the difficult term under Herr Arnold's tutelage. Sebastian on his side formed a lasting attachment for the Rector of the Lyceum, and years later, when Herr Kiesewetter was transferred to Weimar, where Sebastian was then Court Organist, they became close friends.

. . . . .

Sebastian was fortunate in receiving his education at the Lyceum of Ohrdruf. This school belonged to the duchy of Saxe-Gotha, where Duke Ernst had made many remarkable reforms, and all the children in his province had to attend its classes. The pupils were taught theology, reading, writing, arithmetic,

music, and elementary science, all in a thorough and practical way. It was a popular boast that Duke Ernst's peasants were better educated than noblemen elsewhere.

Particular attention was paid to the religious side of education—study of the Catechism, Gospels, and Psalms, and in the higher classes the theology of Luther. This, together with a thorough grounding in Latin, started young Sebastian Bach in the direction which determined his whole future career—this and his natural passion for the organ.

From the very beginning of his stay in Ohrdruf, Sebastian begged his brother to give him lessons on the great instrument in the church of St. Michael. At first Johann Christoph would not consent.

"You must master the harpsichord and clavier before you are ready for organ-playing!" he told his small brother. "You may understand the violin and viola, but that is no preparation for a mighty instrument like the organ."

Johann Christoph had little regard for any but church music; and Sebastian soon came to his brother's way of thinking. Although their father Ambrosius, as *Hof-Musicus* of Eisenach, had been chiefly concerned with secular music, Sebastian from his earliest years showed a preference for the slow-moving, deep-

toned music of the Church, and his years in Ohrdruf strengthened this inclination.

St. Michael's Church stood close by the Lyceum and not far from Johann Christoph's house. Whenever Sebastian heard the sound of the organ he would forget everything else and listen with absorbed delight.

The Sunday services were his especial joy. He found a dark corner in the church where he could watch his brother play and listen unobserved. Sometimes the boy would lose himself so completely in the music that he felt as if he were no longer on the ground, but floating under the arches of the vaulted roof. He could even imagine that the roof opened above his head, and a choir of radiant angels bore him up towards heaven itself. . . .

Johann Christoph noted his brother's fascinated interest. One day he called to him as he was leaving for the church.

"Would you like to try the organ today, Sebastian?"

The boy could hardly believe his ears. "Try the —*organ?*" he cried incredulously.

"Come along," Johann Christoph replied, "and let me see if you have learned anything during these months of watching."

Sebastian trembled with eagerness when he found

himself on the organ bench, with the coveted keyboards before him. He examined the different stops carefully, looked down at the formidable array of foot-pedals, and tried to remember just how he had seen his brother use them. At last he began timidly to play one of the fugues Johann Christoph had recently taught him.

The volume of sound startled the boy at first. Then it intoxicated him; the tone was so different from the thin, reed-like voice of the little harpsichord at home. Gradually Sebastian forgot his panic and lost himself in the glorious sound of the music.

Johann Christoph recalled him to his senses. "That's enough now, young man. I see you are no blockhead. *Now* then, we will get to work!"

Painstakingly, he began at the very beginning. "Here, you see, is the way your right foot must move. Thus must your fingers be held."

Sebastian seemed to have an instinctive feeling for the handling of the organ. Yet it was many weeks before he was allowed to play even the simplest melodies. But he worked patiently and waited, for he knew the joy that would come to him later.

. . . . .

The boys in Herr Arnold's room were nearly all twelve years of age or over. But although Sebastian was only ten, he had more intelligence than most

of them, and he was the only one who dared to stand his ground against the tyrant. Herr Arnold's chief victims were Johann Ernst and Sebastian's brother Jakob—particularly the former, who was as jolly and easy-going as his father had been, but never a brilliant student, so that the Cantor had many an opportunity for scolding, sneers, and even punishment.

Now Sebastian was no tale-bearer, but one morning he decided that matters had gone too far. The Cantor was particularly vicious that day. "Do you mean to tell me," he shouted at Johann Ernst, "that you cannot recite the Seventh Dialogue from Comenius?"

"I thought," Johann Ernst faltered, "that you said the Sixth!"

"*Insubordination!*" Herr Arnold screamed. "Either you were asleep when I gave out the lesson, or else you purposelessly misunderstood my words. It is time an example was made of such behavior. Come here to me, sir!"

He took his cane and struck viciously at the unfortunate boy. "Take this—and this—and next time you come here without your lesson learned I will birch you properly. . . ."

Sebastian rose from his seat, fairly sobbing with rage. "Stop, Herr Cantor!" he cried.

The master paid no attention to him. Sebastian



beat his fists against the desk before him in impotent rage. Then on a sudden impulse he hurried from his place and ran down the hall to the headmaster's room.

"Herr Kieseewetter!"

The Rector was amazed at the appearance of Sebastian, his face distorted with passion and tears streaming down his cheeks.

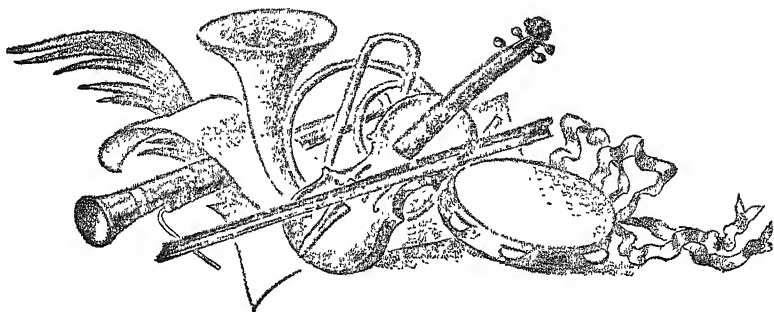
"*Gott im Himmel!* What has happened?" he cried.

While Sebastian poured out the story of the long months of tyranny in Herr Arnold's class, Herr Kieseewetter paced the floor nervously. Finally he sat down heavily in a chair.

"I ought not to be surprised at what you tell me," he said. "But I had no idea things were as bad as all that. I shall take immediate steps for Herr Arnold's withdrawal. Of course, it is not easy to replace a master in the midst of a school year . . ."

"But in the meanwhile . . . what of Johann Ernst?" Sebastian cried.

"Yes, yes. To be sure, something must be done at once. I believe we could promote your cousin into Second Form, and Johann Jakob as well." He smiled at Sebastian. "Perhaps you, too, my boy."



## CHAPTER IV

### *The Christmas Star*

EVERY spring during the Easter holidays the thirty boys of the Lyceum Choir at Ohrdruf went on a week's journey, visiting the neighboring villages and singing at each little town through which they passed. It was a prized experience, and one of the privileges much envied by the other students of the Lyceum.

The choir boys often earned quite a little money on these pilgrimages; at least, the few Groschen seemed like riches to them. But this was as nothing to the joy of the excursion: the long marches through fragrant meadows and woods, singing as they went; the sleeping in the fields when the weather was fair; the general skylarking and high spirits.

Sebastian and his two comrades, Johann Ernst

and Jakob, looked forward each spring with keenest anticipation to the trip. Sebastian loved any kind of travel. He was different from the other Bachs in that respect; most of them cared only for their own province of Thuringia, but Sebastian was always eager to explore new regions and see as much of the world as possible.

Fifteen months had passed now since the two younger sons of Ambrosius had come to live with their brother. Johann Jakob was a tall, awkward boy of fourteen, and even Sebastian had grown, though he was still inclined to be short in stature and heavy-set.

A few mornings before the Easter holidays were to begin, Johann Christoph called Jakob to him and showed him a letter he had just received.

"Here is something that concerns your future," he said in a solemn voice, though with a twinkle in his eye.

Jakob felt his heart sink. He knew that, according to the custom of the time, he was almost old enough to go out into the world and begin his career. He had no great regret at the thought of giving up school, but to leave all his friends and relatives, to go away alone and be apprenticed to some stranger . . . that was a more serious matter.

His elder brother was smiling now. "Oh, but it is *good* news, Jakob," he said. "Better than I had

hoped for. Cousin Bernhard has agreed to take you as apprentice in Eisenach!"

Jakob's spirits rose. Johann Bernhard Bach, son of Aegidius, had succeeded Ambrosius as *Hof-Musicus* in Eisenach. Eisenach! Jakob thought of his childhood days there. Perhaps Cousin Bernhard was even living in the same house where Ambrosius' family had spent so many years! It would be like going back home, Jakob felt.

"But you will have to leave at once," Johann Christoph went on. "Cousin Bernhard says he must have a good soprano for the Easter services, as one of his boys has been taken ill."

No spring pilgrimage for Jakob! This was a bitter disappointment to the lad. But he drew himself up and accepted the matter with good grace. After all, at fourteen one is—well, *almost* a man!

A year later Sebastian's cousin Johann Ernst left in his turn to serve as apprentice. To the surprise of all the family, Christoph's widow allowed her eldest son to go to Hamburg, far from the wooded slopes of the Thuringian hills. Perhaps Sebastian's influence was responsible. He and Johann Ernst had spent long hours together talking over their futures, and Sebastian had inspired his cousin with a desire to travel and see new sights. Hamburg seemed like the other end of the world. But Sebastian made up his mind

that he too would go there some day, and search out the great composers Reinken and Böhm and Buxtehude.

By this time the hated Cantor Arnold had left, and in his place was a young musician from Leina named Elias Herder. Sebastian liked the friendly young Cantor from the first, for Herder was very different in character from his irascible predecessor, and was also a musician of no mean ability. He had received his training at the celebrated school of St. Michael in Lüneburg.

"Wait a moment, my boy," the new master said to Sebastian one morning in 1698 as the choir filed out after practice. "I want to speak to you. Herr Kiese-wetter has been telling me about your musical gifts. I have been listening to your singing, and I believe you should be the leader of the choir!"

The Cantor questioned Sebastian closely about his work and was greatly impressed by the lad's accomplishments. In a family so universally gifted as the Bachs were, musical talent was taken as a matter of course, and Elias Herder was perhaps the first to sense the special genius of Johann Sebastian.

The boy confided his secret ambitions to his new friend.

"The organ is the mightiest instrument of all," he said solemnly. "What is a silly little harpsichord,

or even a violin, in comparison? I mean to be a great organ-player and composer some day. I want to study with the great masters—Buxtehude and Pachelbel, Reinken and Böhm . . .”

“Böhm?” the new Cantor repeated. “Böhm is organist at the Johannis church in Lüneburg. I have often met him there; and Reinken too, in Hamburg.”

The boy’s eyes shone. “Some day *I* shall know them too!”

. . . . .

Sebastian would have been very lonely in Ohrdruf after the departure of Johann Ernst and Jakob if it had not been for the arrival of a new boy, Georg Erdmann, a fat, good-natured youth from Leina, the home of Elias Herder. It was through the new Cantor’s influence that Erdmann was enrolled at the Lyceum. Sebastian, because of his attachment for Herder, took the new boy under his wing, and the two soon became inseparable companions.

Cantor Herder was well pleased with the friendship. Both of these boys were earnest, hard workers, unusually gifted musically, and with fine singing voices. He took pride in instructing them, and in training them to lead the choir.

Herder frequently talked to Sebastian and Georg about his years in Lüneburg, where he had first gone as a member of the Choir in the Klosterschule of St.

Michael, later serving there as assistant Cantor. He told them about the opportunities for musical advancement in the northern provinces. Lüneburg was only thirty miles from Hamburg, where Johann Ernst was still serving his apprenticeship, and where the great Reinken lived. Sebastian and his new friend laid secret plans to set out together and seek their fortunes in the north.

. . . . .

A heavy snowfall covered the little town of Ohrdruf on Christmas Eve of 1699. Sebastian awoke at daybreak, but instead of jumping up immediately to light the fire in the big stove downstairs, he lay in his warm feather bed and thought of all the joys the day would bring.

First and most important was the expected arrival of Jakob and Juditha from Eisenach. They were to set out at the crack of dawn and travel the thirty miles by sleigh, with a change of horses on the way. Old Cousin Johann Christoph, still organist at Eisenach, was coming with them. Maria Salome, who was planning for her marriage to a young musician named Wiegand, had not been able to join the party.

Sebastian could hardly wait to see Jakob and Juditha. His sister was now nineteen, and outgrowing the madcap pranks of her girlhood. But Jakob was still ready for fun, and with Georg Erdmann the

three boys could have a rousing celebration together.

Georg was spending the holidays with the Bachs. Sebastian's only regret was that Johann Ernst could not be with them too; but his cousin was far away in Hamburg. Sebastian might be there himself before the next year was out, for all he knew. He *hoped* he might—it would soon be time for his apprenticeship.

But this was Christmas Eve, and the future could take care of itself. He woke Georg with a joyous whoop and a dig in the ribs, and the two tumbled out of bed into the icy cold of the little attic room.

"See!" Sebastian cried, running to the window. "It is still snowing. What luck!"

"Y-yes," Georg replied with a shiver as he drew on his heavy woolen socks. "I shall appreciate it better when the fire is lit!"

They ran down the steps, three at a time, and started a roaring fire in the big stove.

Soon the whole household was stirring. Dame Dorothea set the kettle on the stove and carried her little son Tobias Friedrich down into the kitchen to dress. Sebastian and his friend ate a hurried breakfast of bread dipped in milk, and then hastened off to choir practice.

Christmas time was one of the most important events of the year for the Lyceum choir. Elias Her-



der had been rehearsing the boys for weeks beforehand, and they had practiced Christmas hymns and carols until they could sing them backwards. At twilight the celebration would begin.

As soon as the rehearsal was ended the boys went out into the woods to cut a small fir tree for the evening festival at home.

The snow had ceased to fall, and the forest lay hushed under its mantle of white. Sebastian stood very still for a moment and listened to the singing of the wind in the pines overhead. The forest seemed to him like a huge cathedral, with the tall, pillar-like trunks of the trees, and the branches weighted down with snow. The wind singing overhead was like a vibrant-toned organ.

Georg was less mystically inclined. "Here's a tree of just the right size for us," he cried, pointing to a beautifully shaped fir about six feet in height.

Sebastian came back to earth. In a moment the still, clear air rang with the sound of the two boys' axes; and by noon they were ready to go home, carrying the fir tree between them, their arms piled high with still more evergreen branches, and some holly and mistletoe they had found.

"What a beautiful tree!" Dame Dorothea cried.

"The finest we have ever had, *I* think," Sebastian answered proudly, and little Tobias Friedrich

clapped his hands and shouted as the boys disentangled themselves from their load of green boughs.

After the noon meal the whole family fell to work to decorate the house. The tree was set up in one corner of the parlor, and the larger evergreen branches were put where they would make the best effect. Sprigs of holly and mistletoe were tucked here and there in spots that were too small to hold the larger greens. When it was all done, the rooms looked very Christmasy indeed.

Then—just as twilight was falling, and the household was proudly surveying the effect of its united efforts—the sound of sleigh bells came through the clear, frosty air. Georg and Sebastian rushed to the door.

“Jakob and Juditha!” they cried in high excitement. “And Cousin Christoph, too—he is driving.”

They rushed down the street and greeted the newcomers with joyous cries. In a moment the sleigh from Eisenach pulled up before Johann Christoph’s house, and Juditha tumbled, laughing, straight into her brother’s arms.

But Sebastian and Georg could not linger for further welcomes. Already the twilight was deepening, and Elias Herder would be waiting for them at the Klosterschule. They bundled themselves carefully

against the cold and hurried out to join the Lyceum choir.

Jakob and Juditha walked from room to room, looking wistfully at the gay decorations. A home trimmed for the Christmas scene brought back memories of the days when their father and mother still lived and Christmas time meant a happy gathering of the whole family.

How scattered they all were now! Juditha's eyes filled with tears. It was so seldom that they saw each other any more. Johann Christoph here in Ohrdruf, and Sebastian with him; Maria Salome about to be married, Jakob apprenticed, and Juditha herself living with her stepmother; while in the churchyard at Eisenach slept Ambrosius and Elisabet with the three brothers. . . .

From the distance came suddenly the sound of singing—the Lyceum choir was approaching. Crystal clear through the frosty air the music floated, faint at first, then gradually approaching closer, until finally the words of the Christmas hymn rang out in full chorus:

“Peace on earth, good will towards men!”

Jakob and Juditha imagined themselves back in Eisenach, listening to the carols of the Currende Choir. Surely the door would open in a minute, and in would

come Ambrosius, with little Sebastian. Mother Elisabeth would run to greet them. . . .

It was late that evening before the three boys went upstairs to the big double-bed in the attic. They were too tired for the usual pillow fights, and Jakob and Georg soon fell fast asleep. But Sebastian lay awake and stared out at a brilliant star that shone through the latticed window at the foot of the bed. He had often watched the same star before; it seemed to him the symbol of his destiny. He would soon be fifteen now, ready to make his start in the world, and he was determined that life should lead him to illustrious goals, as brilliant as the star that he had chosen as his own.

He heard the sound of voices on the stairs below. Johann Christoph and Cousin Christoph from Eisenach were coming up to bed.

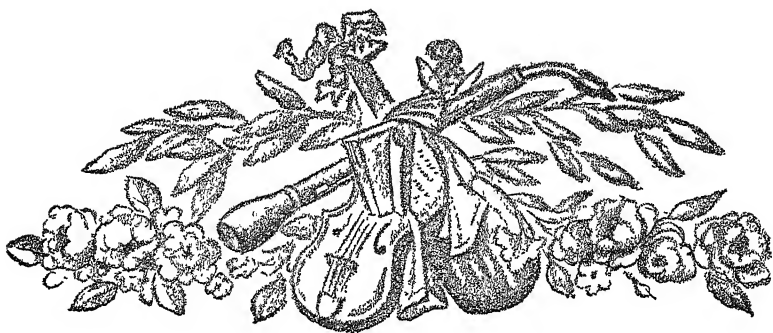
"My son is thought highly of in Jena," the older man was saying. "I believe he could find a place for Sebastian as apprentice this spring."

"Splendid!" Johann Christoph answered. "The boy is inclined to be too high-flown in his ideas. It will be a good thing for him to come under the direction of someone who can curb his fancies a bit."

Sebastian frowned and shook his head at the star. He did not want his fancies curbed. He longed to

consume all knowledge, to become master of all music, to embrace the whole world. . . .

The Christmas star looked down on three sleeping boys. Two of them dreamed of gingerbread men and sugarplums. But the other sailed above the tops of snow-covered pine trees, playing on a mighty organ that echoed through the universe.



## CHAPTER V

### *Travels and Adventures*

SEBASTIAN told his friend Georg Erdmann of the conversation he had overheard between his brother and the Eisenach cousin.

"Christoph says that his son Nikolaus wants to take me on as apprentice at Jena," he began.

"Apprentice at Jena!" Georg exclaimed. "Surely you don't want to bury yourself in a university town."

"No!" Sebastian replied with a toss of his head. "I don't want to go to Jena. The north is the place. . . ."

Georg clapped him joyously on the shoulder. "I have it! Let's go to Lüneburg together. Herr Herder says that boys from Thuringia are in great demand there because of their musical training and

fine voices." He puffed out his chest and sang a few notes in a high falsetto.

Sebastian laughed at him. "You can get a position *anywhere* if you sing like that! But seriously—Lüneburg! It is a long, long way from here!"

"Well, we have strong legs," Georg replied. "And besides, I have saved up some of my choir money. Haven't you, too?"

"Yes, a little. But most of it has gone to Brother Christoph for my keep."

"Well, between us we'll probably have enough to buy food along the way, and perhaps even for an occasional stagecoach ride. And then we can earn money as we go along. You can play your fiddle, and I will sing."

Sebastian shouted again. "Yes," he returned, "you'll sing, and people will pay us generously just to go away and leave them in peace!"

Certainly no one could be serious long in Georg's company; but in the end the boys made their decision—Lüneburg should be the Promised Land, and they would get there even though they had to climb precipices and wade through rivers of fire.

Johann Christoph did not approve of the idea.

"Go all the way to Lüneburg, when Nikolaus Bach will take you as apprentice right here in Thuringia? Ridiculous!" he exclaimed when Sebastian sug-

gested the new plan to him. "Why, Lüneburg is a good two hundred miles from here."

"We will walk—" Sebastian began.

"I tell you it is a ridiculous idea, and the sooner you put it out of your head the better."

Sebastian was bitterly disappointed at his brother's opposition. Johann Christoph had been like a father to him these past five years; he owed some consideration to his wishes. But Lüneburg—Reinken—Böhm! The lure of the north was stronger than any sense of obligation. After all, Sebastian thought to himself, it was *his* life, and he was old enough to know what he wanted. His face set in a look of stubborn resolve, and he went over with Georg Erdmann to talk to Elias Herder.

"Lüneburg?" Herder eyed the boys thoughtfully. "*I* think it is a splendid idea. Let me talk to your brother."

"There are wonderful opportunities for musical advancement in the north," Herder told Johann Christoph. "I could give Sebastian a letter of recommendation to the Cantor and the Rector of the school of St. Michael. I feel almost certain that he could get a position there."

Johann Christoph had practically promised Cousin Christoph to send Sebastian as apprentice to Nikolaus Bach in Jena, and it was not easy to dissuade



him from this plan; but at length, after much discussion and argument, he gave reluctant consent.

A few weeks later Georg Erdmann left the Klosterschule to return to Leina for a visit with his mother before his departure for the north.

On March 15th, 1700, Sebastian in his turn said farewell to Ohrdruf—to his friend Elias Herder, and to the house that had sheltered him for five years. Dame Dorothea and little five-year-old Tobias Friedrich stood in the doorway and waved him good-by. Johann Christoph pressed a few coins in his hand, and gave him a rolled package. "A parting gift," he said, with a twinkle in his eye.

Sebastian did not open the package until he was far along the road. Then he gave an exclamation of surprise. In it was the forbidden manuscript that he had copied years before by the light of the moon in his brother's house.

And now he was on his way to the province where lived the very masters whose works he had copied with such patient perseverance.

. . . . .

The long journey to Lüneburg was a serious undertaking for the two boys, both of them inexperienced and almost penniless. They were obliged to travel most of the way on foot, with an occasional

ride in a jolting wagon, and once or twice the high adventure of a stagecoach drive.

Winter had only just begun to loosen its hold on the land, and strong winds from the north turned the spring rains to sleet and hail. Walking was difficult, the roads were either knee-deep in slush and mud, or slippery and treacherous, and the boys made slow progress. But they both had indomitable will and boundless enthusiasm, and these were to overcome all obstacles along the way and carry them slowly but surely towards their goal.

The road lay for long miles through almost deserted country. It was far different in appearance from the wooded hills and smiling meadows of their native Thuringia. Here the land stretched out to the horizon in open moors covered with heather, or boggy fields with scattered clumps of trees. The villages were few and far between; for long miles the only sign of habitation was a deserted barn or an isolated farmhouse.

At night-time the boys sought shelter in one of these solitary dwellings, where their music always gained them ready admittance. The lonely country folk of those days had few diversions, and the occasional visit of a traveler was the only distraction that broke the monotony of the long winter months. But Sebastian and Georg could not be persuaded to tarry.

They pressed on as fast as they were able, for they knew that their greatest hope of securing a position in Lüneburg lay in their arriving just before Easter time, when experienced singers were in high demand.

Sebastian still retained his high soprano voice. He had not yet grown away from his childlike appearance, and his small stature made him seem younger than he really was. At times his eyes held a dreamy, mystical expression, though his features already gave indication of great strength of character and determination. A close observer might have seen that here was a boy capable of molding forces to his own desires.

On March 21st, when nearly half of the journey had been completed, Sebastian reached his fifteenth birthday. The two boys celebrated the occasion by purchasing their first ride in a stagecoach. Sebastian never forgot the exhilaration he felt when he climbed to the top of the lumbering vehicle, and went tearing along behind the four swift horses. It gave him a feeling of endless power to be speeding along the same highway that had been responsible for so much foot-sore weariness during the long marches from Ohrdruf.

They had been traveling for over two weeks and were ready to drop with fatigue when, one morning just before Easter, they espied the copper-covered bell-

tower of St. Michael's Church rising in the distance. Lüneburg at last! They did not wait to seek out food and shelter, but hurried at once to the old Klosterschule to which Elias Herder had directed them and in which they were hoping to get positions in the general choir.

. . . . .

Herr Braun, Cantor of the Klosterschule at Lüneburg, strode wrathfully up and down before the special choir which was to sing the principal Easter services in the church of St. Michael.

"Will you tell me," he groaned, "*why* Noch should have chosen this week to fall ill? My best soprano! And now Schmersahl, leading alto. *Ach*, what will the singing be like!"

"Your pardon, Herr Cantor," one of the students called from the door, "here are two young ragamuffins who insist on seeing you. They say they have a letter—"

"*Send them away!*" Herr Braun replied testily. "I have no time to talk to anybody now."

"But they say they have a letter from Elias Herder—"

Braun wheeled suddenly and confronted the two travel-stained figures. "Can you sing?" he shouted.

"Yes, your Honor. Certainly, your Honor. We were leaders of the choir in Ohrdruf—" the two boys exclaimed at once.

"Here!" The Cantor thrust some music into their hands. "Sing this for me, and be quick about it! I shall soon see. . . ."

Sebastian and Georg were hungry and worn out, but in spite of this they sang with more vigor and determination than ever before in their lives.

They had hardly gotten through the first page before Herr Braun snatched the music from their hands. "You are engaged—both of you! Here, you—" he indicated Sebastian, "take the first soprano's place. And you—" to Georg, "the alto part." He pushed them into the midst of the waiting choir and resumed his practice with fresh energy.

It was not until several hours later that Herr Braun thought to inquire the names of his new choristers, where they had come from, and what their plans for the future were. Thus Sebastian and Georg were both formally engaged as descantists of the select *Mettenchor* (Matins choir) of St. Michael's, at a salary of twelve Groschen a month, schooling and board included. In addition to these monthly payments they were to divide with the larger choir the proceeds of the school *Currende*, and the fees for at-

tendance at weddings and funerals. Sebastian's share during the year 1700 was about fourteen marks.

. . . . .

The church of St. Michael, with its cloister and other surrounding buildings, stood just within the ancient walls of Lüneburg. It was first built in the tenth century, then rebuilt three hundred years later; and it had remained one of the last strongholds of the Catholic faith to yield to the Lutheran Reformation. The church itself was a fine example of early Gothic architecture. Its lofty nave, with high-flung pillars arching overhead, tall stained-glass windows, carved galleries, and imposing altar-piece, made a deep impression on Sebastian, accustomed as he was to the plain, small churches of Eisenach and Ohrdruf. He loved to wander about the silent aisles, or sit quietly and let the still beauty of the church fill his soul.

The organ impressed him most of all. It was much larger and more imposing than his brother's instrument at Ohrdruf. Three tiers of pipes rose along the north wall of the church, enclosed within a richly ornamented frame surmounted by three gilt crowns. Sebastian longed for an opportunity to play on it.

Because of his record at Ohrdruf he was admitted to *Prima* (First Form) in the Klosterschule. Here the course was very exacting. Besides the regular work in church history and Lutheran orthodoxy,

which all choir boys were required to learn, the students were taught advanced Latin, the rudiments of Greek and Hebrew, history, mathematics, geography, physics, genealogy, heraldry, and German poetry. Also there were daily choir rehearsals, and constant demands for outside singing at weddings, funerals, and feasts, and on other occasions; and finally the regular church services, with new oratorios, motets, Magnificats, and *Stücklein* (small pieces) to be learned for the special religious festivals.

Herr Braun soon came to realize the precocity of his new descantist, and before long he allowed Sebastian access to the church library of music. The school of St. Michael owned a remarkable collection of manuscripts. It had been started in 1555 by the first Cantor, Christian Praetorius, and thereafter each new Cantor had added to the list, until in 1700 it contained all the finest examples of 16th and 17th century music.

Sebastian, in the midst of all this wealth of material, was like a small boy in a candy shop. He wanted to taste and sample everything. His musical genius was so remarkable that he needed only to examine and study the most difficult compositions to understand them and make them his own.

Added to this he was possessed of untiring industry and perseverance. Even at night-time he could

hardly bring himself to leave his work. The fever of learning which had driven him since his earliest days urged him irresistibly forward, and made him reach out in every direction to perfect his art.

It was fortunate that Herr Braun recognized the boy's exceptional musical gifts and training, for just a few months after his arrival in Lüneburg Sebastian lost his high soprano voice.

One morning in the middle of the church service his voice broke suddenly, and proceeded to play him strange tricks. To his dismay—and yet also high amusement—he found his voice irresponsibly falling a sudden octave. Herr Braun, who was directing the choir, noticed his predicament. After the service was over he called Sebastian to him.

“Well, my boy, it looks as if your singing days were over for a time!”

Sebastian looked anxious. He had been so happy here in Lüneburg, so engrossed in his work and so eager to succeed, that he could not bear to think of leaving.

“I believe I can make a place for you as my assistant,” Herr Braun went on.

Sebastian raised his head in surprise. Assistant choir-leader of St. Michael's at fifteen years of age! He had not dared to hope for such an opportunity.

“With your knowledge of the organ, clavier, and



violin," the Cantor continued, "you should be able to accompany the choir—and even direct it if I am called away."

Sebastian thanked Herr Braun with grateful enthusiasm. He felt that his Christmas star was still watching over and guiding his destiny.



## CHAPTER VI

### *New Opportunities*

**H**ERR BÖHM?"

A timid voice called to the organist of the Johanniskirche as he was leaving the church one late spring afternoon in 1700. Before him stood a sturdy, fair-haired boy of some fifteen years, poorly clad, but with a glow in his eyes that made the older man pause.

"Herr Böhm, I have a letter for you from the former assistant Cantor of St. Michael's—Elias Herder."

Georg Böhm's eyes lit up as he took the letter from Sebastian's hand.

"Elias Herder! I remember him well. He was one of my best pupils. What has become of him?"

Sebastian gave him news of the Cantor in Ohrdruf, and then went on to explain how Böhm's presence in Lüneburg had been one of his own reasons for coming there.

"I have admired your compositions for years, sir," the boy continued, twisting his hat shyly. "When I was ten years old I hoped that I might some day meet you!" He told Böhm of the early days in Ohrdruf when he had copied his brother's forbidden manuscript by the light of the moon, and learned to love the works of the northern composers.

"What is your name?" asked Böhm.

"Johann Sebastian Bach."

"So . . . Bach! There is a celebrated family of Bachs in Thuringia. Are you by any chance related to old Heinrich Bach from Arnstadt?"

"He was my great-uncle, sir!"

"Now I understand! As a matter of fact it was largely the influence of Heinrich Bach and his son that shaped my own career." He looked at the boy with interest. "I presume you want to compose?"

Sebastian answered eagerly. "Oh, but I have—already!"

Böhm laughed. "I might have known. A Bach takes as naturally to music as a duck to water. Suppose you bring me what you have written and let me look it over. Perhaps I can help you."

After that, whenever Sebastian could find a free hour, he went over to the church of St. Johannes to Georg Böhm. The latter guided him deep into the mazes of counterpoint and gave him advanced instruction on the organ.

The instrument in the Johanniskirche was even finer than the one at St. Michael's. The organ loft at the end of the church was highly decorated with ornate carvings and figures of saints and angels. But it was the mighty tone rather than the carvings that fascinated Sebastian. Under Böhm's direction he acquired much of the proficiency which brought him such fame as an organist in later years.

. . . . .

"A holiday, Georg!" Sebastian cried to his friend Erdmann. "Herr Braun has given the Mettenchor a week's holiday."

Georg threw his hat high into the air. "No funerals or weddings for seven days—what luck!"

"Now we can go to Hamburg!" Sebastian cried exultantly.

It was early in August of the summer following the two boys' arrival in Lüneburg. Their cherished

plans for a trip to the northern city had not so far been carried out; their time had been too fully occupied with lessons and choir duties. But now the annual summer vacation had come—three weeks for the Klosterschule and one week for the choir boys.

Sebastian had been eagerly awaiting an opportunity to go to Hamburg—first because his favorite cousin, Johann Ernst, was still serving his apprenticeship there; but even more important was the fact that the great composer Reinken was organist at the Catharinenkirche in Hamburg. Reinken was a veteran of eighty years, celebrated all over Germany for his brilliant compositions and masterly improvisations; and Sebastian was most anxious to see him.

Hamburg was a good thirty miles away. It was a strenuous day's march, but the coach-fare was beyond the reach of the two young choristers. So Sebastian and his friend decided to travel the distance on foot.

They set out at crack of dawn. The air was clear and cool then, but when the sun climbed high in the heavens it turned very hot. The road was long and dusty, and the boys thought they would never reach their destination. At noon they sat down beneath a tree on the edge of a little stream and ate the bread and cheese which they had brought with them. Sebastian took out his purse and counted the few coins it contained.

"I have been spending too much for paper and music lately," he said ruefully. "I hope Johann Ernst can find us a cheap lodging place."

Georg rolled over on his back. "No need to worry. *'The Lord will provide.'*" He looked up at the sky and carefully whistled the Doxology out of tune.

Sebastian gave him a mighty shove that nearly landed him in the stream. "Provide you with a bath!"

Georg jumped to his feet and chased Sebastian down the road. "That's right,—run! You'll get to Hamburg sooner!"

. . . . .

Sebastian and Georg were amazed at the size of Hamburg. It seemed to stretch out for miles in every direction, and the high buildings and beautiful monuments filled them with admiration. But when Johann Ernst took them to the harbor, and they saw the vast number of ships at anchor there, with masts like a gaunt forest outlined against the sky, the wonder of these inland-bred boys knew no bounds.

Everything fascinated them: the strange sights, the stranger sounds, and the intoxicating mixture of pungent sea-air, tarred decks, and fragrant spices from foreign lands. Sebastian never tired of watching the sailors at work, loading and unloading bales of mer-

chandise, singing weird chanties, and swearing melodious oaths.

He would have spent most of his time at the harbor if it had not been for the greater attraction of the Cathedral.

At first he was content just to sit in the dim spaces of the church and listen to Reinken's playing. Then, the next afternoon, he presented himself to the aged musician with the letter of introduction which Böhm had written to his former master. Reinken did not show much interest in his young visitor. So many struggling musicians came to him for help. . . . He greeted Sebastian politely enough, but did not offer to do anything for him; and the boy actually learned more through listening to the old organist than through any personal instruction from him.

The days at Hamburg came to an end all too quickly, and before they knew it Sebastian and Georg were started on their homeward journey. At noon-time they stopped at an inn along the road and prepared to buy some food. "Precious little it will be," Georg grumbled as he reached for his last few pennies.

"*Himmel!*" he exclaimed, searching vigorously through all his pockets. "Surely, it can't be that I have lost them!"

Sebastian, who had spent his remaining money

the day before, looked at his friend in dismay. "A—*pickpocket!*—do you suppose?"

The two boys hunted vainly for the missing coins; not even a button was forthcoming from Georg's pockets.

In deep dejection they seated themselves on a bench outside the inn, and sniffed with longing at the savory odors from the kitchen.

Georg spoke in a hollow voice. "The Lord will provide . . . !"

Suddenly a window above them was thrown open and two herrings' heads fell at their feet. Sebastian pounced on them hungrily and tossed one to Georg.

"*Aie!*" the latter exclaimed, "I have broken a tooth! No, not a tooth—*look*, Sebastian!" he cried in amazement. "As I live, a ducat—a golden Danish ducat, right here in the herring's head!"

The boys stared at the coin as if it were a piece of magic that would surely disappear. Then Sebastian looked inside the second herring's head—another ducat! They could hardly believe in their good fortune. It seemed as if the money had dropped from heaven, for when they looked up the window above them was closed, and there was no sign of any human benefactor.

They went into the inn and ordered a sumptuous



repast. "And we have enough money left over," Georg exclaimed, "for another trip to Hamburg. Did I not tell you that the Lord would provide!"

. . . . .

Sixty miles south of Lüneburg lay the town of Celle, under the rule of Duke Georg Wilhelm. Here the Duke held brilliant court in the French style. At that time all French things were in high fashion—French clothes, French food, manners, language, music; everywhere the graces of the French court found favor. Duke Georg had even laid out his garden as a miniature Versailles, copying the great Louis XIV's estate with its statue-bordered avenues, pleasure-gardens, and elaborate fountains. In the palace he had built a small theater, where plays, ballets, operas, and concerts of the highest order were performed. A trained troupe of actors was in constant attendance, as well as an orchestra and chorus. Nowhere else in Germany could such an atmosphere of French elegance be found.

Sebastian was eager to learn more about French music. Lüneburg and Hamburg were too firmly centered in the traditions of the German school to pay great attention to the French style of music. Sebastian was fortunate in having such a brilliant example of the latter within reach, and he did not fail to take advantage of the opportunity at Celle.

It was a much longer trip to the court of Duke Georg than to Hamburg, and the way led through wild, inhospitable country, over execrable roads. But nothing daunted Sebastian Bach when there was an opportunity to advance his musical training; and during the summer following his trip to Hamburg he set out alone for Celle, and patiently covered the sixty miles on foot. During his three years in Lüneburg, in spite of all the difficulties he traveled to Hamburg and to Celle several times.

The library of the St. Michael's Klosterschule—Georg Böhm—Reinken—the French music at Celle; from all of these Sebastian extracted the essence which later he was to weave into his own incomparable works.



## CHAPTER VII

### *Sebastian Begins His Career*

THERE is nothing more for you to learn here," Herr Braun said to Sebastian early in 1703. "You are still young, it is true—eighteen in March?"

Sebastian nodded. "Yes, sir."

"You might remain here longer as assistant," the Cantor went on, "but we could not—at least for some time to come—offer you a position worthy of your talents. You might perhaps better seek elsewhere . . ."

According to the old German guild custom a boy was qualified, after a certain number of years as apprentice and assistant, to take a position as master of

his profession. Sebastian was very young to start out for himself, but he had worked so diligently during his three years in Lüneburg, and had taken such full advantage of every opportunity around him, that he was better prepared for his vocation than most musicians who were years older and more experienced than himself.

He thanked Herr Braun for his advice. "I should like to return to Thuringia," he said, being at heart a true Bach. "It has been three years now since I left home. I have been hoping that I might find a post there as organist."

Unfortunately there were at that time no such positions available in his native province. Most of the musical posts in Thuringia were already held by members of Sebastian's own family. It was as his father had feared: "Too many Bachs—and not enough positions to go around!"

But Sebastian was not discouraged. If he were unable to place himself immediately as organist, he would be content to wait, and in the meanwhile take any other chance that came along. He could always find a situation with an orchestra, playing violin or viola.

When he heard that Duke Johann Ernst, younger brother of the reigning Duke of Saxe-Weimar, desired a viola for his private orchestra Sebastian applied

for the position, and was formally engaged shortly before Easter, 1703.

Duke Johann and his wife, Dorothea Sophia, were both devoted to music, and it was their greatest ambition that their two sons should become accomplished musicians. The younger boy, although only seven years of age at the time that Sebastian went to Weimar, showed exceptional promise. He played the violin with rare talent, and the clavier as well, and even showed marked ability in composition. Little Johann Ernst was so fond of music that on the evenings when the orchestra played he was allowed to stay up, and sometimes joined the older musicians on his own small violin.

A few evenings after Sebastian's arrival, the young Duke asked him shyly, "Might you be related to Nikolaus Bach of Jena?"

Sebastian smiled. He had always loved children, and this delicate, sensitive boy appealed to him particularly.

"Nikolaus Bach is my cousin, your Highness," he replied.

At this, Johann Ernst forgot his shyness and held out his small violin. "It was Nikolaus who made my violin for me!" he cried.

Sebastian and the young Duke were firm friends from that moment. He gave the boy lessons on the

violin during his stay in Weimar, and made for him a number of transcriptions from the leading Italian composers. Among these the transcriptions of the Vivaldi concertos are played often by our orchestras today.

. . . . .

If Sebastian had only been organist at Weimar, instead of viola-player, he would have been quite content there. But he felt lost without an organ.

Soon after his arrival he sought out the acquaintance of old Johann Effler, court organist to the elder Duke, Wilhelm Ernst. When Effler found that his brother's new viola-player belonged to the celebrated family of Bachs and had spent three years in northern Germany, he offered him the use of his own organ.

"You must not lose your proficiency for lack of practice," he told Sebastian. "If you can arrange to come here when there are no services in the church, you are welcome to play when you will."

Sebastian was not slow to take advantage of this offer. He spent all his spare hours in the ducal chapel, working out new themes and perfecting his technique. Old Johann Effler shook his head over the audacity of his young friend's harmonies. This was far different music from his own stiff cadenzas!

One day Duke Wilhelm, elder brother of Bach's patron and reigning Duke of Weimar, passed by the

chapel as Sebastian was in the midst of an intricate improvisation. He stopped, listened in surprise, and then entered the chapel and mounted to the organ loft, expecting to find some celebrated visiting organist. He could hardly believe his eyes when he discovered a young boy barely eighteen years of age.

"Where did you come from, my lad?" he asked.

Sebastian flushed. "I am violist in the chamber orchestra of His Gracious Highness Duke Johann," he replied.

Duke Wilhelm frowned. "*Violist*, when you can play the organ like this?"

Sebastian answered eagerly. "It is only for a time, sir! Some day I hope to have an organ of my own."

"You should!" the Duke said with a gracious smile. "If Johann Effler were not such an old and tried servant I should be tempted to offer you the position right here!"

Duke Wilhelm did not forget the impression which the young musician's playing had made on him. Five years later, when Johann Effler died, he called Sebastian to Weimar to take the old organist's place.

. . . . .

Sebastian had not been long in Weimar when he heard of a new organ that was being built in Arnstadt. Johann Ernst Bach, who had returned

from his apprenticeship in Hamburg and established himself in his native town, urged Sebastian to apply for the new post.

"The Bonifacius church has been without an organ ever since it was rebuilt eighteen years ago," Johann Ernst wrote to his cousin. "During all that time they have been collecting funds with which to buy a really fine instrument. Now they are installing the new organ. You could not find a better place!"

The prospect appealed to Sebastian for many reasons. He would be very glad to establish himself at Arnstadt. This city had been the home of generations of Bachs. His own father Ambrosius had been born there, and his grandfather as well. Great-uncle Heinrich had held the post of organist at the Liebfrauenkirche for many years; and Johann Ernst's father, twin brother of Ambrosius, had been *Hof-Musicus* there until his death in 1688. Finally, Sebastian's stepmother, Dame Barbara Margaretha, had recently returned to Arnstadt with his sister Juditha, and Johann Ernst's mother and sister were living there too. In short, Sebastian felt that he would be entering into the bosom of his family if he went to Arnstadt.

Added to these advantages was the prospect of a fine new organ, of which he would have full command. He therefore made plans to go to Arnstadt



as soon as the instrument was completed and apply for the position.

He did not know that the fame of his playing in Weimar had already spread through the country. One morning, a few weeks before the completion of the organ in the Bonifaciuskirche, Sebastian received an imposing-looking document from the Council of Arnstadt. By some strangely prophetic chance it was addressed to "*Herr Johann Sebastian Bach, fürstl. Sächs. Hof-Organist zu Weimar*" (princely court-organist at Weimar).

But Sebastian was too excited to notice the address. He tore the letter open with eager haste. It was an invitation to come to Arnstadt and test out the new organ of the Bonifacius church, and to report on its technical and tonal qualities. Incidentally, his playing would show whether he would be suitable for the post of organist.

" . . . and if Herr Bach cares to take this test, we will send a horse and attendant to escort him from Weimar on the day selected for the trial."

Sebastian read the letter through a second time. He could hardly credit his good fortune: to be actually *offered* the coveted post, and on top of that to be sent for in state, like some celebrated personage! He had trudged so many weary miles on foot that this seemed the crowning glory.

His test at Arnstadt proved a veritable triumph. The judges who heard him play were so impressed by his understanding of the technique of the organ and by his remarkable playing that they offered him the position immediately.

That evening there was high celebration among the Bachs of Arnstadt, and a gathering of all the family at the home of Aunt Elisabet. Everyone showered Sebastian with felicitations on his achievement. Juditha and his cousin Barbara Catherina paid him mock homage and crowned him with a wreath of daisies.

"Behold King Musicus!" they cried, sweeping deep curtsies before him.

"If I am King, then you must pay me lawful tribute," he exclaimed, laughing, and cornered each of them until they surrendered him a kiss.

Even Johann Ernst, though he had not been so fortunate in his own appointment, congratulated his cousin warmly. "You must come here to live with us, Sebastian," he said. "It will be like the old days in Ohrdruf."

. . . . .

On August 9th Sebastian received notice of his appointment:

Whereas our right honorable and gracious Count and Lord, Anton Günther, hath been pleased to appoint you, Johann Sebastian Bach, to be organist of the New Church, you shall in particular be faithful, loyal, and serviceable to his lordship, and in general show yourself apt and habile in your calling, eschewing other tasks and occupations, and on Sundays, feast days, and other seasons appointed for public worship in the said New Church, shall attend at the organ committed to you and perform thereon as shall be required of you.

You shall moreover use all care and diligence, that if any part thereof shall fall into disrepair, the fault be notified and amended forthwith, though none may be admitted thereto save with the consent of the Herr Superintendent [Olearius]; and at all times you shall take heed that it suffer no hurt and be maintained in good order. In your conduct and behavior you shall be God-fearing, temperate, well-disposed to all folk, eschewing ill company, and in all ways show yourself an honorable servant and organist before God and your worshipful masters. In return you shall, against your receipt, receive for yearly pay and entertainment 50 florins, and for board and lodging 30 thalers, drawn as follows: from the Beer money 25 florins, from church funds 25 florins, and the residue (30 thalers) from the Hospital.

Given under the seal of his lordship's Chancery and signed as is customary, 9 August, 1703.

The arrangements recorded here in connection with Bach's salary need some explanation. The

church's regular income was not large enough to take care of the whole of the salary, which therefore had to be met from other sources—the taxes imposed on the beer-houses, and the fee coming from the Hospital of St. Georg and St. Jakob in whose chapel Bach was to play the organ at the services held for the hospital inmates.

Thus, on August 14th, Johann Sebastian Bach, aged eighteen years and four months, was formally received *durch Handschlag*—by the shaking of hands—as organist of the St. Bonifaciuskirche at Arnstadt.

A few months later Johann Jakob came to Arnstadt on a visit. Sebastian had not seen his brother since the old days in Ohrdruf. It was a joyful reunion for them both, and they had many things to tell each other. Jakob had been trying for some time to decide where he would establish himself. He had never been away from his native Thuringia, and his greatest desire was to get out and see the world.

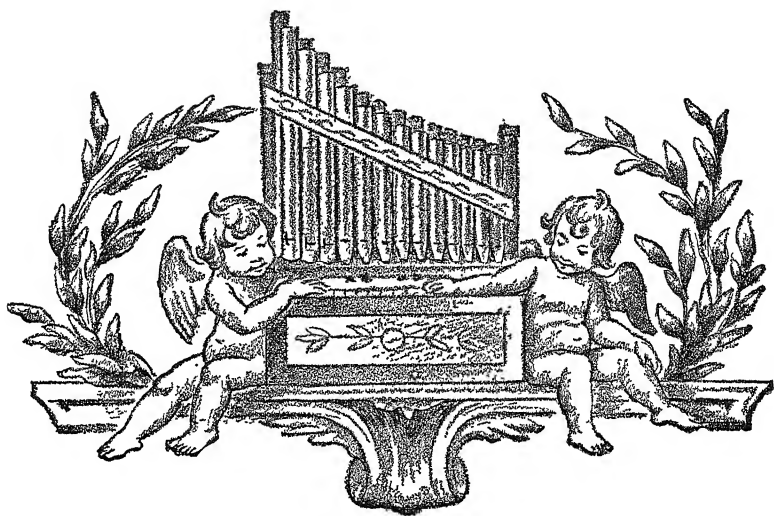
"A splendid opportunity has presented itself," he told Sebastian. "King Charles of Sweden is looking for a first-class oboist to join his orchestra. I mean to try for the position."

"King Charles of Sweden!" his brother exclaimed. "But he is campaigning in Poland now—you could *never* get to Poland!"

The whole family tried to dissuade Jakob. Po-

land was a wild and unsettled country; no telling what might befall him there. But Jakob was determined, and none of their arguments could shake his decision.

As the time came for him to leave, Sebastian presented him with a *Capriccio* he had composed for the occasion—"On the departure of a beloved brother." It was written in three movements. In the first, the traveler's friends try to dissuade him; in the second, written in fugal form, several voices declare the dangers of the journey; and the third movement laments in mournful tones the traveler's decision and ends with his departure—the notes of the postilion's horn and the rumbling of the coach.



## CHAPTER VIII

### *The Young Organist of Arnstadt*

SEBASTIAN missed the large spaces of St. Michael's Church in Lüneburg, with its vaulted roof and noble colonnades. After the highly decorated cathedrals of northern Germany, the Bonifaciuskirche seemed dreary and uninspiring. In 1581 it had been destroyed by fire, and for a full century it stood in blackened ruins. Finally in 1683 it was restored, but with small claim to beauty. The interior was somber and severe, with a barreled roof and unadorned galleries—a typical *Prediger-*

*kirche*, or "preaching church," of the Lutheran Reformation.

During the first year of his appointment at Arnstadt, Sebastian devoted himself completely to the duties of his office and, more particularly, to the new organ in the Bonifaciuskirche.

"I have no time for dancing and good times," he told Johann Ernst when the latter tried to coax him into occasional relaxation. "Now that I have an instrument of my own, I've got to study the organ really seriously."

Johann Ernst looked at him in surprise. "Study—seriously! But you are already a great organist!"

Sebastian smiled. "Not so great as I mean to be!"

Johann Ernst hardly knew what to make of the expression on his cousin's face. He himself believed in enjoying life, and was content to be a good musician so long as it did not interfere too much with his pleasures. And he could not see that Sebastian had greater ambitions than these, that this gifted cousin meant to reach the highest pinnacles of his art, since only in this way could he fulfill the insistent desire of his heart.

And so Sebastian threw himself with ardor into his work, practicing for long hours and studying diligently the works of the most celebrated organists of

the day. He also set himself to serious work in composition.

At Easter, 1704—the year following his appointment—the first of his great Cantatas was performed at the Bonifacius church. It was an ambitious work, scored for strings, drums, three trumpets, solo quartet, and chorus; there was hardly room for all the performers in the narrow gallery of the church.

Among his many other duties, Sebastian was obliged to direct the choir, and this he found the greatest trial of his new position. The choir was made up of boys from the nearby Gymnasium, a defiantly undisciplined set with whom the *Consistorium* (City Council) had repeated trouble. Sebastian—himself only a boy and with a temper that was easily provoked—at length grew so exhausted by the continual struggle with their pranks and quarrels that he could hardly go on with his work, and had to give up his composing entirely. In 1705, two years after his appointment, he finally petitioned the Consistorium for an assistant to train the boys. Ignoring his request, the Council only rebuked him because he had not produced more works like his Easter Cantata of the previous year. Sebastian retorted that he was quite willing to compose further music provided a director should be engaged to conduct the choir. The Council refused to grant this, and replied that Herr Bach



would achieve better results if he improved his personal relations with the choristers.

Sebastian's patience was sorely tried. . . .

. . . . .

Arnstadt was pleasantly situated on the slopes of the Alteburg in the Thuringian hills. Two small rivers circled its medieval walls and towers and pushed inquisitive streams across the cobbled streets and down the slanting hillsides. Toward the eastern wall lay the castle of Count Anton Günther—"Schloss Neideck"—surrounded by gardens and miniature fountains and lakes.

In the center of the town a spacious Market Place presented a colorful picture when the peasants from the surrounding country set up their stalls of fruits and vegetables and all sorts of farm produce and live stock. Picturesque old buildings formed a square around the Market Place: on one side an ancient inn, the Schwartzburger Hof; on another, the highly decorated Rathaus or Court House, with its *Bier-Glöckchen* (beer bell) which rang every evening to notify the guests when it was time to leave; on still another side, a row of projecting timbered buildings formed a covered gallery or colonnade. And it was in this gallery that Sebastian had an experience which still further annoyed the authorities.

After the style of the time, Count Anton Gün-

ther maintained a private orchestra at his court, and often invited Sebastian to join in the music. Of the twenty-one musicians employed there regularly, many resented this flattering attention, especially those who came from the Gymnasium. One of these was Geyersbach, the bassoon-player, who—as a senior pupil of the school—naturally sided with the Gymnasium boys in the feud between choir and choirmaster. A conceited, hot-headed young fellow, he had long been looking for a pretext to quarrel with Sebastian—and now it had come: somebody had told him that Sebastian had referred to him as a *Zippel-fagottist* (dunderheaded bassoon-player)!

When, therefore, Geyersbach next met Sebastian walking through the gallery with his cousin Barbara Catherina, the fagottist barred their way with his cane and arrogantly ordered Sebastian to halt; and the quarrel came swiftly, both boys getting angrier with each sharp accusation and sarcastic retort, until at last they came to blows. With a cry of “Coward!” Geyersbach brought his cane heavily down on Sebastian’s shoulders, whereupon Sebastian drew his sword—and suddenly the two were surrounded by excited burghers from the Market Place.

In an hour the scandal had spread through Arnstadt: the St. Bonifacius organist had attacked a fellow-musician! And at once Sebastian was called be-

fore the Consistorium to account for his disgraceful conduct.

"An extremely unfortunate affair!" said the Superintendent sternly. "Has Herr Bach already forgotten the terms of his contract?" He cleared his throat and read from the paper before him: "'In your behavior you shall be God-fearing, temperate, well-disposed toward all . . .' What have you to say?"

Sebastian tried to explain that he had only been defending himself, but it was difficult to make the crusty old members of the Council listen to reason. All they knew was that the organist of the Bonifacius church had engaged in a street brawl.

Sebastian felt that his situation in Arnstadt had become intolerable. "I cannot stand it any longer," he told his Aunt Elisabet and Johann Ernst. "I shall have to find a position somewhere else."

Elisabet begged him to reconsider. "It would be too bad if you left Arnstadt," she said. "We should miss you, Sebastian!"

Johann Ernst made a suggestion. "Why don't you just ask for a leave of absence, and get away until this affair blows over? I can look after your work here while you are gone."

Sebastian was struck by the idea. He had long wanted to visit the organist and composer Buxtehude, in the north of Germany, and he remembered hearing

that the old musician was looking for a successor. Perhaps there would be a chance for him. He therefore asked immediately for a month's leave of absence, and in October, 1705, he started on the long journey to the north.

. . . . .

Dietrich Buxtehude, celebrated organist of Lübeck, was anxious to retire and find a suitable husband for his daughter. According to tradition whoever succeeded him was in duty bound to marry his daughter; then, as was the custom, Buxtehude would pass his remaining years with his son-in-law's family. But poor unattractive Anna Margreta was proving far from easy to find a husband for, and the position of organist was therefore still open. Only a year or two before, her father had been filled with hope when two young men came from Hamburg to submit their applications—Herr Georg Friedrich Händel\* and his friend Mattheson. But something must have gone wrong. They were duly presented to Anna Margreta, who had put on her best dress for the occasion. When they were invited to play for him, however, young Mattheson said something about having sprained his wrist, and Herr Händel really played very poorly, considering what a reputation he already had. The old

\* In this book the name is spelled Händel (pronounced Hendle) because that was how Händel himself spelled it until he began living in England, when he dropped the *umlaut* and used the spelling "Handel" customary today (pronounced Handle).

man could not understand it. The two applicants had departed *so* hastily, seeming quite indifferent to the position—and Herr Buxtehude was sure that Händel, at least, would have brought fame to Lübeck. Well, well . . . here was young Bach coming now; perhaps he would seize the chance to win a fine post and a wife into the bargain!

In October and November of each year Buxtehude held a festival of sacred music in the Marienkirche of Lübeck. This was called the *Abendmusik* (evening musicale) and was conducted by Buxtehude at the organ, assisted by a large choir and an orchestra of forty instruments. It was an imposing performance that had gained wide notice all over northern Germany.

Sebastian had long been anxious to hear the famous *Abendmusik*, so he planned to reach Lübeck in time for this event. It was close to twilight on a late Sunday in October when he entered the Marienkirche. The last rays of the setting sun shone through the stained glass windows and threw a pattern of color on the white marble figures of the saints and angels. Sebastian looked about the beautiful old church with eager appreciation. After the rude and somber interior of the Bonifaciuskirche, it was a rare privilege to worship in a place of beauty once again.

All at once the organ rang out in full tones. "Hallelujah, hallelujah!" sang the hidden choir.

Above his head, through the balustrade of the two side galleries, Sebastian could catch glimpses of a considerable orchestra which accompanied the singers and added to the rich background of the organ.

The young musician was entranced. He had never heard sacred music performed on such a grand scale. As the concert progressed he felt carried away by the majestic harmonies, and grew more than ever convinced that this was the form of art to which he would devote his life's work: music of the church—organ, voice, and instruments, and a mighty combination of them all, dedicated to the worship of the Most High. . . .

At the close of the service, Sebastian sought out Buxtehude and introduced himself. "I have often heard of your *Abendmusik*," he told the old composer, "but I had no idea that it was so wonderful!" He spoke almost shyly, as if embarrassed by the intensity of his emotion. "It seems to me that nothing *anybody* could do could be more splendid than to create music in the way you do!"

As might be expected, Buxtehude was favorably impressed by his visitor's enthusiasm, and at once invited him to play. When Sebastian sat down at the organ and improvised on one of the older man's themes, Buxtehude knew that here before him was a genius even greater than his own. Had he at last

found a successor, and a son-in-law? He lost no time in presenting Sebastian to Anna Margreta.

But Sebastian seemed curiously unwilling to discuss matrimony.

. . . . .

During the weeks that followed, Buxtehude and his young visitor from Thuringia spent much time together, the old composer directing and inspiring the younger artist's work. These hours with Buxtehude strengthened the impression which the *Abendmusik* concerts had made on Sebastian, and helped to mold his whole future career. Nothing less than the highest forms of music could satisfy him now!

The month's holiday passed all too quickly.

"It is time for me to be starting homeward," Sebastian said regretfully when the end of November was at hand.

Buxtehude looked at the young musician closely. "Surely you are not yet ready to leave!" he exclaimed significantly. "There are certain things we might discuss. . . ."

Something in the expression of Sebastian's face must have warned him, for he went on quickly without waiting for a reply: "On December 2d we are to have the great memorial service for the Emperor Leopold I, and the following day a celebration in

honor of the coronation of the new ruler, Joseph I. You *must* stay for these!"

Sebastian allowed himself to be persuaded. He never forgot the two impressive ceremonies. For the Emperor's funeral services the church was heavily draped in black, and festoons of crape hung between the pillars. Only a few candles lighted the gloom, and the somber music of Buxtehude's *Castrum Doloris* played by muted instruments sounded deeply mournful.

But on the following day everything was changed. Flowers took the place of crape; the music rang out in jubilant tones, and everything was festivity and rejoicing. "The King is dead. . . . Long live the King!"

When these celebrations came to an end, Sebastian should have turned his face southward. But still he could not tear himself away from the inspiration of this stimulating environment. Other concerts held him in Lübeck through December; then came Christmas with its wealth of special music, and the New Year celebrations. It was well on in January before he could bring himself to leave.

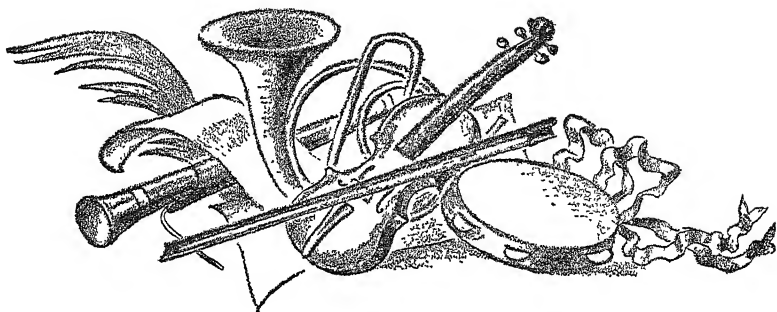
Buxtehude was genuinely disappointed that his young visitor would not remain permanently in Lübeck. Sebastian might have been tempted if it had not been for the unfortunate appendage to the posi-



tion. But Anna Margreta had not grown any more attractive since Händel and Mattheson passed her by. Moreover, she was a good ten years older than the young organist from Arnstadt.

Better the unruly choir boys of the Bonifacius-kirche, and even the tyrannical City Council, thought Sebastian, than to hold the finest post in Germany—with such a wife!

He bade Herr Buxtehude a respectful farewell and started on the long journey back to Arnstadt.



## CHAPTER IX

### *Maria Barbara*

ON the first Sunday after Sebastian's return to the Bonifaciuskirche, the congregation sat up in surprise when he began to play. This was not at all like his former performances. The music displayed remarkable power and brilliance, but at the same time it was very disconcerting. The choir was completely thrown out by the strange manner of Sebastian's accompanying. He introduced so many extravagant variations and counter-themes that the boys could not follow the melody.

The Consistorium was extremely displeased, and once again called him to account. This is the way that Herr Olearius, the Superintendent of the Consistorium, examined him:

*Olearius*: The City Council desires to know where you have been for so long, and who gave you leave of absence.

*Bach*: I have been to Lübeck to study my profession, and before I went, Herr Superintendent, I asked your permission.

*Olearius*: That is so; but you said that you would be away four weeks, and you have been absent four months. What explanation do you offer?

*Bach*: I thought my deputy [Johann Ernst] would satisfactorily fill my place, and consequently that no complaint would be made.

*Olearius*: Complaints have been made to the Consistorium that you now accompany the hymns with surprising variations and irrelevant ornaments, which obliterate the melody and confuse the congregation. If you desire to introduce a theme against the melody, you must go on with it and not immediately fly off to another. And in no circumstances must you introduce a *tonus contrarius* [conflicting with the melody].

There is another matter: we are surprised that you have given up performing figural music, and conclude that the omission is due to your bad relations with the pupils of the Gymnasium. We must therefore ask you to tell us explicitly that you are prepared to practice them in figural music as well as in the hymns. We cannot provide a Cantor, and you must tell us categorically, yes or no, whether you will do what we require. If you will not, we must find an organist who will.

To the last question Sebastian replied, as once before, that he would do as he was asked provided a

director were appointed to help train the choir. The Consistorium reprimanded him again. . . .

Sebastian would have been tempted to leave Arnstadt once more, this time for good, had not a new interest held him fast bound. He had reached the age when, according to the good old German custom, he should settle down and take a wife. And now at last he had found the choice of his heart.

. . . . .

When Michael Bach presented little Sebastian with a violin at the memorable family reunion, years before in Eisenach, he did not realize that one day this same small boy would become his son-in-law. Unfortunately, Michael did not live to see that day. In 1694 he was laid to rest in Gehren, where he had spent so many years as organist; and ten years later his wife followed him. Maria Barbara, now an orphan, went to Arnstadt to live with her mother's younger sister, Aunt Regina Wedemann. There she met Sebastian, and it proved to be love at first sight for them both.

Sebastian, very stiff and self-conscious, sat in Tante Regina's small parlor and tried to express a little of the feeling in his heart.

"I can remember how I loved the sound of your name when I was a child," he told his cousin. "It

seemed like music to me!" He looked at her bashfully. "Now the music is in your voice. . . ."

Maria Barbara blushed prettily. "But you have not heard me sing yet," she cried with ingenuous confusion.

Sebastian became bolder. "Why not sing for me *now*!" He went over to the little harpsichord and began a soft accompaniment.

Maria Barbara had heard a great deal about Sebastian—of his adventurous travels to northern Germany, his visits to the great composers, and his renown as a musician. She felt that she would never dare to sing before this great personage!

But she need not have feared. Had her voice been no more than a faint silver bell, he would have thought it the loveliest in the world. One look from her blue eyes was enough to awaken glorious music in Sebastian's heart.

Maria Barbara finally allowed herself to be persuaded. She knew that her voice had won other hearts. . . . As for Sebastian, at the harpsichord, he was intoxicated by the sweet intimacy of this music; but presently he became annoyed at the tinkling tone of the instrument.

"This isn't the right sort of accompaniment for you," he told her. "You ought to sing to the great organ!"

Maria Barbara laughed merrily. "A *woman*—to sing in the church? Nobody ever heard of such a thing. It would be a fine scandal!"

"Not at all!" Sebastian said with a frown. "Why should only men be admitted to the choir loft? That is all nonsense; a woman has just as much right there! Come on," he coaxed her; "it is my organ, and I'll be responsible."

Though Maria Barbara was quite breathless at the audacity of their scheme, she could not say no to her fascinating cousin.

The church was quite silent and deserted when they entered. Sebastian summoned the bellows-boy to pump the organ, and soon the prelude to one of her favorite songs rang out through the Bonifacius-kirche. She was so transported by the glorious sound of her cousin's accompaniment that she forgot her timidity and let her voice ring out in fearless tones. She had never seemed so lovely to Sebastian. He wished that he might go on forever making music with this beautiful creature by his side. . . .

Suddenly a gray head crowned with a black skull-cap appeared at the top of the organ-loft steps. It was Herr Olearius in a fine rage.

"What does this mean?" he stuttered, looking angrily at Maria Barbara. "By what right—"

The girl, suddenly silenced and not a little fright-

ened, tried to hide herself in the shadows beyond the organ, but Sebastian turned fiercely on the Superintendent. "Yes," he cried, "go on!"

Herr Olearius was somewhat taken aback by the young man's attitude. "Well," he returned, "you must admit that this is a pretty performance! You know quite well that you have no business—"

"Am I not organist here?" interrupted Sebastian hotly. "Must I ask permission to play on this organ?"

The Superintendent glared at him with unabated ferocity. "Maybe—but I'm going to report your conduct, anyhow," he threatened. Then he turned on his heel and left the church.

Once again, therefore, Sebastian was summoned before the Consistorium, now to be reprimanded for introducing a *fremde Jungfer* (stranger maiden) into the choir loft of the Bonifaciuskirche. But this time he did not mind. He had definitely decided to leave Arnstadt and take another position. For Maria Barbara had promised to marry him as soon as he could establish himself satisfactorily.

The renown of young Bach's talents had spread all over that part of Germany, and not a few places had been offered him, though thus far none of these had attracted him very much.

. . . . .

Sebastian, on his way to Tante Regina's house, hurried so fast through the Market Place and down the gallery to the Kohlgasse that he had to stop a moment to catch his breath.

"Good news at last, Maria Barbara," he cried as soon as he could speak. "They have offered me the post at the famous Divi Blasii church in Mühlhausen. I believe it is just the place for us!"

Mühlhausen was a "Free Imperial City" of Germany, and justly proud of this distinction. Like Arnstadt it was surrounded by medieval walls and flanking towers, with narrow, winding streets lined with ornamented and gabled houses. Dominating the city stood three great churches—the Marienkirche, the Kornmarktkirche (Corn Market Church), and the Kirche Divi Blasii (Church of St. Blaise or Blasius). The town was famous for its musical traditions, and Sebastian hoped that there he would be free of the petty annoyances that had restricted him in Arnstadt.

"The Council of Mühlhausen wants me to go for a test immediately," he told Maria Barbara, "and if it is satisfactory I am to take over the organ soon after." He looked at his cousin tenderly. "This means that now we can at last be married!"

"Have they offered you good terms, my Sebastian?" Maria Barbara asked with housewifely concern.



Sebastian's face clouded a little. "The salary might be larger," he said, "though it is as much as I have been getting here in Arnstadt. Then besides the eighty-five guldens yearly, we are to have three measures of corn, and firewood—one truss each of beech and oak, and six trusses of fagots. Little enough, though, for a family!" he sighed.

"Oh, but we'll get along splendidly," Maria Barbara exclaimed. "I have almost enough furnishings for the house from my father's old home in Gehren. Perhaps the Council will send a wagon to carry our things to Mühlhausen." She was full of plans for the future.

Sebastian was more worried over the small salary than he cared to admit. It was one thing to get along as a bachelor. Heaven knew that, even so, he had been able to save but little. But now—on the same salary—to run a full household, to take on an apprentice or two, as he would now be expected to do, and to support a family—that would be a far different matter.

Providentially an unexpected addition to their fortunes came just at that time. Sebastian's Uncle Tobias Lämmerhirt, the brother of his mother Elisabeth, died suddenly in Erfurt, and left his young nephew fifty guldens. It was not a large amount,

but it helped to set up the new household and buy a few needed furnishings.

Sebastian had not seen his uncle for years, and he was greatly touched at this evidence of being remembered. He tried to show his gratitude by composing a solemn cantata for Uncle Tobias' funeral service.

When he went to Erfurt to attend the funeral, Sebastian made the acquaintance of a distant cousin related to him through the Lämmerhirts, a musician named Johann Gottfried Walther. The two young men had much in common. Walther was just six months older than Sebastian, and had received his musical training from Johann Bernhard Bach of Erfurt.

"What a pity that you are not coming to Weimar," Walther said when he heard that Sebastian was planning to move to Mühlhausen. "I myself have recently been appointed organist at the Stadtkirche there. What good times we could have had together in Weimar!"

Sebastian told him of the few months he had spent four years before with Duke Johann's orchestra in Weimar. He asked especially after the Duke's son, the young musical prodigy, Johann Ernst. Bach had often wished that he might return to Weimar. Its atmosphere of culture and artistic appreciation ap-

pealed to him strongly. But there had been no positions vacant in Weimar at that time.

. . . . .  
October 17th. . . .

Sebastian woke with a start. The first rays of the sun were just beginning to shine through the window of his room, and for a minute he could not imagine what had made him wake so early.

Then he remembered. This was his wedding day! October 17, 1707. . . . Maria Barbara had chosen the date "because seven is a lucky number, you know, so we shall be thrice blessed, my Sebastian!"

He jumped from his bed and looked eagerly out of the window. Not a cloud in the sky! It was a glorious autumn day, crisp and clear. The ride to Dornheim would be perfect.

Maria Barbara and Sebastian had decided to be married in the little village of Dornheim, not far from Arnstadt. Here an old family friend, Johann Lorenz Stauber, was pastor of the quaint, whitewashed "Predigerkirche" (preaching church), and it had long been agreed that he should perform the ceremony.

Johann Ernst was to be Sebastian's first witness. He stopped for him on his way to Tante Regina's house.

"I have a message for you, Johann Ernst!" Sebastian cried. "The Consistorium has promised me

that you shall have the vacant post at the Bonifacius-kirche!"

Johann Ernst hardly knew how to thank his cousin. "That you should think of me in the midst of your own plans—*ach*, Sebastian, it is like you! May Heaven grant you the happiness you deserve!"

When they reached the house of Aunt Regina Wedemann, Sebastian hurried in to greet his bride. A strange mist clouded his eyes as he saw her come down the stairs; she looked so fresh and beautiful in her simple wedding-gown. He could hardly believe that this radiant creature would soon be his wife, his helpmate through the years to come. He thought of his father, and of his dear mother Elisabet, and wished that they might have been there to share his happiness. Sebastian formed a silent prayer that he might make Maria Barbara as happy as Ambrosius had made Elisabet.

A gay band of relatives met at the house of Aunt Regina. Several carriages had been engaged for the drive to Dornheim, and all of the Bachs of Arnstadt and the surrounding towns had assembled to witness the marriage.

The forest surrounding Arnstadt was a riot of autumn coloring, and as the wedding guests drove along their way to Dornheim they sang lusty German folk songs and joked together in joyous good-humor.

Soon they reached the little church, and before Sebastian could realize what had happened the simple Lutheran ceremony was over, and he and Maria Barbara were man and wife. The event was recorded in the registers of both Dornheim and Arnstadt:

On 17 October 1707 the worthy Johann Sebastian Bach, bachelor, organist of the church of Divi Blasii, Mühlhausen, lawfully begotten son of the deceased honorable and distinguished Ambrosius Bach, town's organist and musician of Eisenach, to the virtuous Maria Barbara, spinster, youngest surviving daughter of the late right worthy and distinguished Michael Bach, organist at Gehren, here in the house of God, by permission of his lordship the Count, and after banns duly called at Arnstadt.

After the ceremony the whole company drove back to Arnstadt to celebrate at the Schwartzburgerhof, where long tables had been set up and an elaborate wedding-feast prepared. The guests made merry far into the night. There were singing and dancing, laughter and much music.

"Long life to Sebastian and Maria Barbara!" shouted Cousin Nikolaus, who was bursting with good cheer, good wine, and good will to all the world. "And may Heaven bless them with many children!"

Pastor Johann Lorenz Stauber and Maria Barbara's young Aunt Regina had eyes only for each other. They sat close together, whispering tender

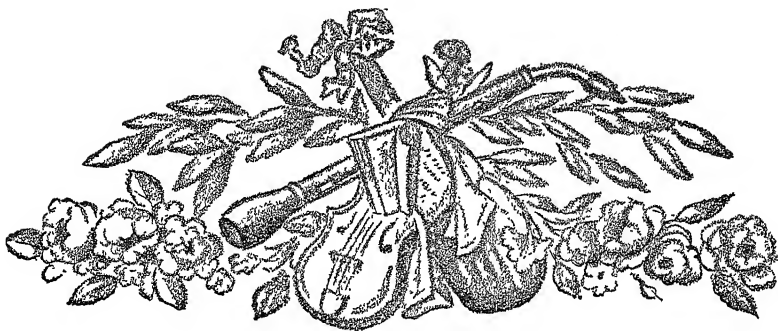
confidences, till Aunt Regina's blushes began to attract good-natured banter from the rest. Finally the pastor rose to his feet.

"It seems a fitting moment," he said, looking about at the assembled family, "to make an important announcement. At least," he added with a smile at his self-conscious companion, "it is important to *us*! Fräulein Regina has promised to become my bride."

He was interrupted by rousing cheers and congratulations. "A pastor in the family!" "What luck!" "Now we shall all have to behave!"

Though Sebastian and Maria Barbara were delighted at the news, they were too much engrossed in each other to think long of anything else. Sebastian sat with his arm about his bride and wondered how the world could hold so much happiness. He had everything that his heart could wish for: the bride of his choice, a promising new position, and—most important of all—the power within himself to do great things.

He felt as if nothing but joy could now be in store for him. But even should the future bring sorrow and misfortune, he would always have this moment to look back upon.



## CHAPTER X

### *The New Household*

**S**HORTLY before Sebastian and Maria Barbara moved to Mühlhausen, a devastating fire swept through the city. Nearly four hundred buildings were burned down before the blaze could be stopped, and the beautiful church of the Divi Blasii came close to destruction.

Sebastian arrived on a desolate scene. Mühlhausen lay in blackened ruins all around the church where he was to be organist, and the devastation even stretched as far as the city walls on one side. There was no lodging to be found near the Kirche Divi Blasii, so he and his bride were obliged to set up their new home outside the walls, far from the church.

Each morning Sebastian bade Maria Barbara good-by and started on the long walk through the

desolate streets to the church. Reconstruction had already begun, but it was slow work, and years went by before the city regained its former appearance.

At noon Sebastian retraced his steps to the little house outside the city walls, where he knew Maria Barbara would have his dinner waiting for him. It was a long walk, but there was no need for hurry. The Germans have always believed in allowing themselves plenty of time for rest and relaxation at the noon meal.

One noon, shortly after the new household was organized, Sebastian and his bride were sitting down to their cabbage soup when a knock was heard at the door. Sebastian went to open it and found a young boy standing on the steps.

"Please, sir," the youth exclaimed, looking eagerly at his host, "are you the great Herr Bach?"

Sebastian tried not to look important. "I—I am Herr Bach, Johann Sebastian Bach. . . ."

The boy went on bashfully, "I heard you play in Weimar, at the ducal chapel, three years ago."

"*Weimar!*" Sebastian exclaimed. "So you are from Weimar. I have happy memories of that city!"

His young visitor looked at him with pleading eyes. "I have walked all the way to ask—to ask if you would take me for a pupil. . . ."

"Come in, come in," Sebastian said kindly.



"Here we are standing on the steps, and the soup is growing cold!"

He made the boy sit down and share their meal, and while they were eating he questioned him further. "It is true that I am looking for a suitable apprentice," he said. "What is your name, my boy?"

"Martin Schubart," the lad replied. "If you will take me, sir, I promise to be very diligent and to work as hard as I can."

Sebastian liked the boy, with his open countenance and evident desire to please. He took him at once into his household, and for ten years Martin Schubart remained with him as pupil and apprentice.

. . . . .

The Kirche Divi Blasii was an exceptionally fine example of Gothic architecture. Perhaps that was one of the reasons why Sebastian had decided to accept the post at Mühlhausen. He was always susceptible to beauty, and a cathedral seemed to him the place where man's efforts to glorify his Creator should be expressed by the highest art of which he was capable.

The very atmosphere of such a church stimulated him to creation. He felt moved to express his emotions in music that would rise to the very gates of heaven. All of his compositions are filled with the simple but sincere fervor of his religious faith.

At first everything went smoothly in Mühl-

hausen. The City Councilors valued their new organist's work highly, and treated him with courtesy and consideration. When he composed a new Cantata for the inauguration of the Burgomasters in February, they were enthusiastic about the work, and even had it printed—the only Cantata of Bach's that was published during his lifetime.

Gradually, however, Sebastian became conscious of certain undercurrents in Mühlhausen that hindered him in his work. There were two opposing factors in the church—the orthodox Lutherans with their narrow adherence to old forms, and those who were more liberally inclined in their beliefs. Sebastian found it impossible to please both factions.

Moreover, his salary was quite insufficient to his present state. Maria Barbara had been trained to strict economy, but even with the most careful planning she could not make both ends meet. The young couple longed for children, yet they could ill afford to raise a family under such conditions. Sebastian knew that the Council of Mühlhausen was not able to give him a larger salary; already he was getting considerably more than his predecessor had received.

Maria Barbara tried to cheer her young husband's lagging spirits. "Something will turn up. Just wait and see, my Sebastian. Each night I pray. . . ."

Quite unexpectedly, Maria Barbara's prayers were answered. Early in June Sebastian received an imposing document from Weimar. The messenger who bore it wore the livery of Duke Wilhelm Ernst, the older brother of Bach's former master. Sebastian tore open the seals eagerly.

"Herr Johann Sebastian Bach, Hof-Organist of the church of the Divi Blasii in Mühlhausen, is invited to take the post of organist and chamber musician to Duke Wilhelm Ernst in Weimar."

Maria Barbara, who had been interrupted in her housework by the arrival of the Duke's messenger, was reading the document over Sebastian's shoulder. She could hardly contain her joy. Sebastian, however, nudged her warningly. He fixed the messenger with a grave look. "Tell your master," he said in a dignified voice, "that I shall—ah—consider his kind offer. . . ."

When they were alone he and Maria Barbara embraced each other with enthusiasm. "One hundred and fifty florins the Duke has offered me!" he cried exultantly. "Almost double my salary here in Mühlhausen!" He put his arms tenderly about his wife. "Now we'll not have to worry about the little one who is coming!"

Sebastian regretted the necessity for abandoning his present situation, for the Council had been kind to him and allowed him many favors. But he had a

worthy successor in view for the post he was leaving. Johann Friedrich Bach, third son of old Cousin Johann Christoph who had died five years before in Eisenach, and younger brother of Nikolaus, was looking for a position, and Sebastian felt sure he would be acceptable as a candidate at the Church of the Divi Blasii.

On June 25th Sebastian presented his resignation to the Council of Mühlhausen. They accepted it with regret, and appointed Johann Friedrich Bach to fill the vacant post.

On July 4th, 1708, Sebastian and Maria Barbara, with the apprentice Schubart, packed their belongings into a rough wagon, climbed up beside the driver, and started for Weimar, where they were destined to remain for nine years.

. . . . .

Weimar today is chiefly remembered because the two great poets Goethe and Schiller lived there during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. But nearly a hundred years before that period Weimar was already known as a cultural center. Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Saxe-Weimar was a prince famed for his virtue and for his devotion to the arts, and he attracted to his court the highest culture of the day.

Bach had hardly unloaded the wagon of his household goods which he had brought from Mühl-

hausen before Gottfried Walther was knocking at his door. He had not seen Walther since the previous year in Erfurt, when they met at the funeral of Uncle Tobias Lämmerhirt.

"You have arrived just in time, Cousin," Walther exclaimed. "The Duke is having an evening of music tonight, and your presence in the orchestra is required at the castle."

Duke Wilhelm maintained an orchestra of trained musicians and gave frequent concerts at his palace. Bach, newly appointed organist and chamber-musician to His Highness, did not look forward to the orchestral part of his work, though it would bring him into contact with many of the most interesting and brilliant people of the day. He was naturally retiring in disposition, and preferred his quiet organ bench to the pomp and glitter of court life.

Walther held out a large bundle. "The Duke requires his musicians to wear uniform," he said. "I have brought yours."

Sebastian looked curiously at the elaborate suit he was to wear—a jacket with heavy braiding and with a cape hanging from the shoulder, tight breeches and high boots, and—crowning all—a high cylindrical hat. It was the uniform of a Hungarian hussar. Maria Barbara admired it extravagantly, and when her

husband was finally dressed to go to the palace she said he had never looked so handsome.

. . . . .

It was still daylight when Walther and his newly arrived relative passed through the narrow winding streets on their way to the Duke's palace.

"The music begins at seven," Walther explained, "because the Duke requires all the lights in his palace to be extinguished at nine o'clock."

Sebastian looked surprised, and Walther laughed. "He is extremely virtuous, this Duke of ours! His Highness believes in 'early to bed, early to rise.' In winter time the lights are out at eight."

Duke Wilhelm was known for his piety and his strict observance of all church ceremonies and obligations. The castle Chapel was the center of the court's activities, and the Duke required all his courtiers to attend the services regularly.

As the two cousins walked towards the castle, Sebastian examined the town curiously. Five years had passed since his first stay in Weimar; he had forgotten how small and unattractive the houses were, how narrow and poorly paved the streets, with their large, uneven cobblestones. Yet the city had a certain charm he had not found elsewhere, and he was glad to be back.

This feeling deepened when they came to the

Schloss Wilhelmsburg. A deep moat surrounded the castle, though it was no longer necessary now to raise and lower the great portcullis according to ancient usage; the drawbridge remained only as a relic of medieval days when the castle had been a stronghold and place of refuge in case of attack by the neighboring barons.

Two sentries in splendid uniforms stood before the gate and challenged the young men, who were admitted only after Walther produced the necessary credentials. A few steps took them into the large quadrangle or inner court, and to the entrance of the castle itself. Here they were met by a lackey who carefully cleaned and dusted their boots before allowing them to venture on the highly polished parquet floors.

Sebastian, always sensitive to beautiful surroundings, looked about admiringly as they passed down the long gallery to the Duke's reception hall. On the walls hung fine old paintings and tapestries; heavy curtains of stiff brocade covered the windows, and from the ceiling were suspended crystal and silver lustres filled with lighted candles. Rare pieces of old furniture added to the luxurious effect, and after the humble surroundings of Sebastian's own home these made a deep impression on him. He wished that Maria Barbara could have been there to see them too.

When they reached the big reception hall, Sebastian hardly knew which way to turn. Huge mirrors confronted him on every side, and reflected an enchanting assemblage of courtiers clad in silk and satin, exquisite ladies sparkling with jewels, powdered footmen and pages. Walther grasped Bach firmly by the elbow and brought him before Duke Wilhelm who, resplendent in his court uniform, sat on a dais at the end of the hall.

Through the wide-open French doors the fragrance of the summer twilight floated in, and gradually the company drifted out to where the orchestra was stationed on the broad terrace overlooking the River Ilm. As Bach was about to take his place among the musicians, he felt someone tug at his sleeve. Turning, he saw a lad of about twelve years of age smiling up at him with a friendly look. Under the boy's arm was tucked a violin.

"Herr Bach! You haven't forgotten me?"

A smile of recognition spread over Sebastian's face. "If it isn't the young Duke Johann Ernst!" he cried with pleasure. "You have grown so that I hardly knew you!"

The boy's father, Bach's former patron and Duke Wilhelm's younger brother, had died the previous year, and Sebastian had not known whether he would still find his young favorite living in Weimar.



"I have been studying harmony and counterpoint with Herr Walther," the boy continued. "This evening I am to be soloist."

Bach congratulated the lad warmly. "I shall be greatly interested to hear what progress you have made during these past five years," he said. When, a little later, the young Duke played, Bach was amazed at the lad's brilliant performance. He felt that he would go far in the musical world. If Johann Ernst had not met with a sad accident and lost his life seven years later, Bach's prophecy might well have been fulfilled.

But on this summer evening at the Schloss Wilhelmsburg, no thought of tragedy darkened the spirits of the gay company. For a long time a rosy afterglow hung in the western sky and made the musicians' candles almost unnecessary. Then the full moon rose slowly in the east, shedding enchantment over everything. In the park below, the tree-frogs began to sing a soft accompaniment to the orchestra. And Sebastian lost himself in the music and the magic of the evening.

. . . . .

"Herr Bach!" Martin Schubart's excited voice rose from the foot of the steps leading up to the organ loft where Sebastian was practicing in the castle Chapel.

"Herr Bach—please—you are to come at once,"

Schubart continued anxiously. "Already I have fetched the midwife. . . ."

Bach closed the organ keyboard quickly and shut down the damper in the charcoal brazier at his feet. It was bitter cold in the organ loft of the Chapel, but his allowance of charcoal did not permit extravagances.

He hurried back with his apprentice to the modest home in the Herder house.

Maria Barbara's Aunt Regina, now the wife of Pastor Stauber, met him with a tiny bundle in her arms.

"Look, Sebastian!" she cried. "Through the grace of God a daughter has been born to you!"

Sebastian felt a strange hammering in his throat. For a moment he could hardly speak. "Maria Barbara . . . ?"

Tante Regina reassured him. "She is doing splendidly. See—your child!" She drew aside the cover of the little bundle in her arms, and Sebastian found himself looking down at the small red face of his first-born. He had hoped that the first would be a boy, but no matter! Already a deep affection for this tiny new daughter filled his heart. He reached out his arms for the baby and held her close. . . .

Love for his Creator and love for his children and wife were always to come first in Johann Sebas-

tian Bach's life. And music was his means of expressing this love.

Two messengers were immediately dispatched to fetch Aunt Marta Catharina, widow of Uncle Tobias Lämmerhirt, and Dame Dorothea, wife of brother Johann Christoph, to serve as godmothers to the new child.

Sebastian and Maria Barbara had prayed that their first child might be born on Christmas Day, but it was December 27th before the little one arrived. Two days later, on December 29th, 1708, according to German custom the christening party repaired to the castle Chapel where the newborn child was baptized "Catharina Dorothea."

Sebastian knelt in the church and gave thanks for the safe arrival of his child, just as his father had done at Eisenach when he himself came into the world, twenty-three years before.



## CHAPTER XI

### *Hof Concertmeister*

**I** TELL you any good musician should be able to read music at sight," Bach exclaimed to his friend Walther one winter's evening in Weimar as they sat together beside the stove in Sebastian's dining-room.

"Perhaps so," Walther replied drily, "but I have never seen one who could read *everything* at sight!"

Bach puffed lazily at his old clay pipe. He was famous for his own ability to read music; he could decipher whole orchestral scores at a glance—even when the different parts were scattered—and could

improvise missing fragments at the same time if necessary.

"I said," Bach went on with a twinkle in his eye, "any *good* musician! I'll wager, now, there is no music written that *I* could not read at sight."

Walther offered no reply, but he raised his eyebrows and smiled a little. In the next room Sebastian's newborn son, Wilhelm Friedemann, began to wail. Over two years had passed since the young Bach family had moved to Weimar. Little Catharina Dorothea would soon reach her second birthday; now, to Bach's joy, Maria Barbara had presented him with a son. It was the beginning of the vast family that continued to increase for over thirty years.

Walther finally spoke musingly, as if to himself. "You can read *anything*? Good—splendid!" He turned to his friend. "Come over to breakfast with me Saturday morning, Sebastian. I may have a surprise for you."

On Saturday morning, after the early service in the Chapel, Bach went over to Walther's apartment for the promised breakfast.

"*Guten Morgen!*" his friend cried from an adjoining room. "I will be with you in a moment, my Sebastian. Make yourself comfortable meanwhile."

Bach sauntered over to the clavier to see what

music was occupying Walther at the time. A new score stood temptingly open on the instrument. He sat down and began to play.

The music seemed quite simple. No—not so simple as it looked. A curiously intricate passage baffled his fingers. He began again, only to stumble over the same passage. All at once a peal of laughter startled him. Walther stood in the doorway, holding his sides.

“A *good* musician can read *any* music at sight!” he quoted mockingly.

Bach closed the clavier with a bang. “*Donnerwetter!* Some music is not *meant* to be read!” He waved the sheets accusingly in Walther’s face. “It is a joke . . .” Suddenly he burst into a shout of laughter. “Is this the ‘surprise’ you promised me?”

Walther joined in the laughter. “Yes, Herr Music-reader. But I have another, better surprise waiting for you in the dining-room.”

Bach hastened to the breakfast table. A tall figure dressed in black stood with his back to the window; then advanced with outstretched hands.

“Well, now, Sebastian! I wonder if you remember your old rector of the Klosterschule at Ohrdruf?”

Bach hastened forward with an exclamation of pleasure. “Herr Kieseewetter, is it really you? I

haven't seen you for ten years or more. What good fortune brings you to Weimar?"

As the three men sat down to breakfast Kieseewetter explained his presence. "Your gracious Duke Wilhelm Ernst has appointed me rector in the reconstructed Gymnasium here," he said.

"What luck!" Sebastian exclaimed. "I have never forgotten the kindness you showed me in Ohrdruf. Now it will be my turn. . . ."

Herr Kieseewetter was soon introduced to Maria Barbara and the two babies, and he spent many hours at the little home in the Herder house. Bach always knew what to expect when his former master visited them.

"Come now, Sebastian," he would say, drawing his host towards the harpsichord. "Can't we have a little music?" And Sebastian never refused.

It was through Herr Kieseewetter that Bach came to know Johann Matthias Gesner, established in 1715 as assistant principal of the Weimar Gymnasium. Gesner shared his rector's enthusiasm for music, and he had heard of Bach's great talents.

"It is a great privilege to meet you, sir," he said when Kieseewetter introduced him to the young musician. "It will be a still greater privilege to hear you play."

Bach left Weimar two years after Gesner came

to the Gymnasium; but it was not the end of their friendship. Seventeen years later they met again at the Thomasschule in Leipzig, where Sebastian was already established as Cantor, and Matthias Gesner became rector.

. . . . .

Early in 1713 twins were born to Sebastian and Maria Barbara. Bach was enchanted; the infants—a boy and a girl—were as alike as those other famous Bach twins, his own father Ambrosius and Uncle Christoph.

Bach's greatest joy and relaxation, when he returned home after a hard day's work, was to gather up the twins, one on each arm, and sing foolish ditties to them which he improvised for their amusement. Little Catharina Dorothea and two-year-old Wilhelm Friedemann would sit at his knee and shriek with laughter at their father's droll verses. Often they joined in the chorus with clear voices and true musical feeling.

Maria Barbara was always happiest then. Life had been very good to her, she felt. A kind, true-hearted husband—happy, healthy children—and enough of this world's goods to keep them in comfort if not in luxury. What more could any woman ask?

She went about her daily tasks with a thankful heart, managing the household, caring for the chil-



dren, directing the activities of her country maid-of-all-work, and overseeing her husband's welfare and that of his pupils and apprentices who lived with them.

Two new apprentices had recently been added to the household. Together with Martin Schubart they occupied a large room at the top of the house, where they pursued their studies, and where Bach came during his free hours to teach them and oversee their work.

One morning in November, 1713, he returned earlier than usual from the Chapel, and hurried up to the apprentices' room.

Martin, by the window, was busily engaged in copying a score for his master. In those days very little printing was done, and practically all of the music had to be painstakingly written out by hand. It was part of every apprentice's training to learn to copy notes in clear and accurate style.

Gotthilf Ziegler sat at the harpsichord, practicing five-finger exercises, while the youngest pupil, Caspar Vogler, struggled with a fugue which Bach had set him to write.

The three apprentices rose respectfully to their feet when their master entered the room. Caspar tried to hide behind Martin Schubart, but Bach caught a glimpse of the younger boy's tear-stained face.

"Now then, Caspar," he cried, "what is wrong?"

Caspar flung himself down before Sebastian. "*Ach*, master . . . it is no use! I can never learn to copy out a fugue correctly—much less compose one!"

Bach raised the boy and put a comforting arm about his shoulders. "*Who* says that you can never compose a fugue? Don't be in such a rush, boy! You can't learn *everything* in a few months!" He winked at Martin. "Herr Schubart, here, will tell you it is not so easy. Why, even *I* cannot always write a fugue straight out. The main thing is not to get discouraged; just keep on trying. *Work* is what counts!"

The apprentices had heard this admonition many times before. Bach himself was indefatigable; industry, he said, was the only way to accomplishment.

Sebastian's glance fell on a sheet of paper which Ziegler had covered with notes. He picked it up with a frown.

"This is careless work, Gotthilf," he said severely.

Ziegler looked crestfallen. "I was in a hurry, master. . . ."

Bach tore the paper across. "That is no excuse, my boy! You shall copy this exercise ten times over; perhaps that will teach you to be more careful. And see that there is not a single mistake!"

Gotthilf hung his head in shame, for he knew

that the reprimand was merited. Bach was a kind master, always indulgent to those who really tried to learn, but impatient of all carelessness.

Many other pupils came to Sebastian in the years that followed, and all of them distinguished themselves and brought credit to their master's teaching.

In 1715 Johann Christoph of Ohrdruf sent his second son, Johann Bernhard, to become apprentice to his brother. Bach, remembering the five years he had spent in Johann Christoph's home, received Johann Bernhard with open arms, and welcomed the opportunity to repay his older brother for all that he had done, eighteen years before, to help the lonely orphan who had come to him from Eisenach.

. . . . .

The first great sorrow of Sebastian and Maria Barbara's married life came a few months later with the loss of their beloved twins.

The causes and the cure of disease were not well understood in those days. A small number of drugs, a few potent herbs to ward off fever and colic, blood-letting for any and all ills; aside from these simple remedies there was little that even the best doctors could prescribe. Medicine as a science was only beginning to be studied. And it was the children who suffered the most of all. Even in ordinary times only the strongest survived. Sebastian and Maria Barbara,

in spite of all their efforts, were unable to save their precious twins.

The following year the most famous of all Bach's sons was born in Weimar, Carl Philipp Emanuel; and the year after, Johann Gottfried Bernhard. Later, more especially during his second marriage, came a succession of sons and daughters, though few of these survived infancy. Altogether Bach had twenty children. But little Christoph and Maria Sophia were the only twins ever born to Sebastian, and none of his other children quite made up to him for their loss.

. . . . .

Late in 1714 Duke Wilhelm journeyed to Cassel to pay his respects to Friedrich, the future King of Sweden, who was passing through that city on his way north. Like all the nobility of the day, Duke Wilhelm traveled with a large retinue of attendants, and, because Prince Friedrich was known as a special patron of music, the Duke took several of the court musicians with him—chief among these his *Concertmeister* Bach.

"Since your Highness has such a high regard for the tonal arts," he told Prince Friedrich, "I have brought my Hof-Organist to play for you."

"We are exceedingly fond of the organ," the Prince said graciously. "Our own court organist is

past master of the art. But doubtless yours," he hastened to add politely, "is finer still. . . ."

Duke Wilhelm bowed. "It is said that none can compare with Herr Bach. But I shall let your Highness judge of this if you will come with us to the Hofkirche."

Bach was eager to distinguish himself before his royal audience. He seated himself at the organ and considered what he should play. There was not time for a long performance, so with sudden inspiration he began a brilliant and difficult solo for foot pedals alone.

The deep tones of the great pipes reverberated like thunder, and his feet flew over the pedals with such speed and accuracy that Prince Friedrich became lost in wonder. Bach had hardly finished playing when his royal listener jumped enthusiastically to his feet.

"I have never heard such a miracle of dexterity, though I have listened to the greatest organists of the day! Here—" he pulled a valuable ring from his finger, "this is small reward for such a fine performance, but take it in memory of our meeting!"

In later years an eye-witness of the scene wrote: "Bethink you, if Bach's skillful feet deserved such a bounty, what gift must the Prince have offered to his hands as well?"



## CHAPTER XII

### *Bach Leaves Weimar*

BACH was always happiest when in the midst of his family. The tempers and obstinate resentments which sometimes overcame him in other circumstances were all forgotten when he returned to Maria Barbara and the children.

Yet he enjoyed short trips away from home. "They make me appreciate the blessings of my family all the more," he told Maria Barbara. And when Duke Wilhelm informed him, soon after his return from Ernst August's wedding, that he was to go with him on another journey, Bach was ready to start off at a moment's notice.

"On February 23d, Duke Christian of Saxe-

Weissenfels is planning a special celebration for his birthday," the Duke told Sebastian. "He has invited our court to take part."

Bach knew what was expected of him. "Would your Highness like me to compose a Cantata for the occasion?" he asked.

The Duke considered for a moment. "That would be fitting, Herr Concertmeister. But it should be something light—not church music," he added. "Do you think you can forget your religious compositions long enough to write something less weighty?"

Sebastian smiled. "I think it might be done, your Excellency!"

Bach had been chiefly occupied with sacred music, but he was always ready to try new forms, and he had little difficulty in complying with Duke Wilhelm's request. Before long he had produced his first secular Cantata—"Was mir behagt"—in honor of Duke Christian's birthday.

Duke Wilhelm planned to have his own orchestra, assisted by that of Weissenfels, perform the Cantata. Accordingly he took his musicians with him, and they arrived in Weissenfels the evening before the eventful day in order to be there for the early service in the Chapel the following morning. No celebration, however worldly its aim, could take place in those days without an elaborate church service first.

On February 23d, Duke Christian's Chapel was packed with his guests and their retinues. It was a frosty winter's morning, with snow and ice outside. The congregation shivered through the long service in the cold stone Chapel. Many of the ladies had brought small braziers to put beneath their skirts, but even so they could hardly keep their teeth from chattering during the prayers.

After the church ceremony came to a close the day was given over to hunting. This was Duke Christian's favorite sport; indeed it was considered the highest form of entertainment by the nobles of the day, and most of them maintained hunting preserves. Outside the Chapel the grooms waited with the horses, and the hounds tugged impatiently at their leashes. As soon as the service was ended the men galloped away into the forest, while the women retired to an upper room of the castle where they could gossip and work at their tapestry, and watch from the windows for the return of their lords.

Duke Christian's wife was busy superintending the preparations for the elaborate birthday feast to be given in the great hall of the castle that evening. Bach and his orchestra were to play the Cantata as *Tafelmusik* (table music) for the event.

When Sebastian entered the vast hall he could hardly believe his senses. The air was filled with the



perfume of orange-blossoms and jasmine. The huge room had been transformed into a tropical garden, with tubs of cypresses, almonds in full bloom, orange trees, and myrtle. Enormous porcelain stoves and countless charcoal braziers gave the illusion of mid-summer; it was hard to believe that snow covered the land outside.

Shortly before the dinner hour the musicians filed into an upper gallery which overlooked the hall but was screened from its view by a bank of blossoming jasmine.

"Herr Bach," a voice said at Sebastian's side, "here is the trumpeter from Zeitz who is to assist with the Cantata."

Bach turned quickly and welcomed the visitor. His own orchestra was to be augmented by a number of the Weissenfels musicians, together with a few outsiders for special parts. Behind Herr Wülcken, the trumpeter from Zeitz, Sebastian noticed a young girl about fifteen years of age.

"This is my Anna Magdalena, *Herr Concertmeister*," the trumpeter said, drawing the girl forward. "She has a fair voice." He looked at his daughter with tender pride. "The *Kapellmeister* of Weissenfels has asked her to take the place of the second soprano who is ill."

Anna Magdalena blushed prettily and hardly

dared to raise her eyes. She had heard remarkable tales about the celebrated young organist from Weimar. His fame as a musician was known through the country, and there were many tales about his prowess at the organ. For instance, a friend had told her just the other day that Bach would sometimes go into a village church dressed as a simple countryman and play the organ so marvelously that people would exclaim: "That must be Bach—or else the Devil himself!"

Sebastian welcomed the girl courteously and assigned her to a place among the singers. When she lifted her sweet young voice in the second-soprano part of his Cantata, he listened in delighted surprise. There was something singularly appealing about Anna Magdalena Wülcken, and she remained in Sebastian's memory long after the evening at Weissenfels was forgotten.

. . . . .

In April, two months later, an invitation came from Halle, asking Sebastian to examine the organ at the Liebfrauenkirche, which was now finally completed.

Bach was frequently called upon to examine new organs in neighboring towns, and report on their capacities. Not only was he a performer without equal, but he had a remarkable understanding of his instru-

ment. When he tested a new organ he would first draw out all of the stops and play full force—to see, as he said, whether the instrument had good lungs. Then he would go over every part carefully, and no weakness escaped recording in the detailed report which he presented at the end of his examination.

Two other distinguished organists shared the responsibility of examining the new instrument at Halle. One of them, Johann Kuhnau, was Cantor of the celebrated Thomasschule in Leipzig. He and Sebastian were lodged in the same inn, and often talked together, discussing music and the relative merits of their positions.

Cantor Kuhnau told the younger musician many details about his work at the Thomasschule in Leipzig, and particularly of the educational advantages to his sons which his position there had brought. The memory of these talks remained with Sebastian, and perhaps influenced him to make application for the same post at the Thomasschule when Johann Kuhnau died, seven years later.

The visiting musicians who came to examine the organ at Halle found themselves royally entertained during their stay. Servants and coaches were placed at their disposal, together with the finest lodgings, and bounteous feasts were prepared for their enjoyment.

One of the *Speisekarten* (bills-of-fare) for the

occasion has been preserved: "Beef à la mode, pike with anchovy sauce, smoked ham, peas, potatoes, sausages and spinach, a quarter of roast mutton, boiled pumpkin, fritters, asparagus salad, lettuce salad, radishes, roast veal, fresh butter, candied lemon peel, and preserved cherries."

"Little wonder," says Terry in his eminent biography, "that a big blot fell on the 'Bach' as the writer signed a receipt for six thalers, his fee!"

. . . . .

In 1715 the young Duke Johann Ernst died in a tragic accident. Bach grieved deeply, for he loved the boy not only for his own character but also because of his rare musical talent and accomplishments. Bach now formed a strong attachment for Johann Ernst's elder brother, August Ernst. But Duke Wilhelm had never cared for his elder nephew; and when, a year later, August Ernst married the Duchess Eleonore of Anhalt-Cöthen against his uncle's wish, the Duke became bitterly antagonistic to the new household at the *Gelbes Schloss* and refused to have anything to do with them.

Bach's sympathies were all with the young couple. When Duke Wilhelm's enmity reached such a point that he forbade his courtiers—"under pain of a ten-thaler fine"—to associate with any of the hated household, Bach refused to submit to this restriction,

and continued in close friendship with August Ernst and his young bride; and Duke Wilhelm bitterly resented this insubordination.

Early in 1717, a year after August Ernst's marriage, the aged *Kapellmeister* of Weimar, Samuel Drese, passed away, and a few mornings later Duke Wilhelm called Bach to a private interview with him.

"You have doubtless been waiting to hear who is to be appointed successor to Herr Drese," said the Duke.

Bach bowed with an expectant smile. For nearly three years now he had been performing the greater part of the aged *Kapellmeister's* duties. Old Drese's son was supposed to be his father's assistant, but he was a musician of inferior ability, and Bach could not believe that he would be considered capable of filling the vacant post.

Duke Wilhelm tapped his fingers together and looked sharply at his *Concertmeister*. "I have decided that there is just one man who deserves the position. . . ."

Bach bowed again, with a deprecating wave of his hand.

"That man is Herr Drese's son."

Sebastian's head went up and a look of amazement spread over his face.

The Duke smiled grimly. "Does this surprise

you? Surely—" his voice held a note of sarcasm, "surely so good a friend of my *esteemed* nephew could hardly expect favors from *me*?"

Bach looked at him in consternation. He was hurt to the quick, but at the same time he realized now that his failure to secure the higher position was in large measure his own fault. Still, he had served the Duke faithfully, and it was a blow to be rewarded in this fashion.

August Ernst was highly indignant when he heard that Bach was not to be given the post of *Kapellmeister*. He knew that Duke Wilhelm really had the highest regard for Bach's ability, and was only punishing him for his independence. Here, he thought, would be an excellent opportunity to annoy his uncle and do Sebastian a good turn at the same time.

"You must leave my uncle's service," he told Bach. "With your reputation you will be able to find a position wherever you choose. I will help you."

The Duchess Eleonore thought immediately of her brother. "Leopold has done nothing but talk about Bach since he heard him play at our wedding last year," she exclaimed. "He said that he would give anything to have such a wonderful musician in his household. And now he writes that his present *Kapellmeister* is resigning in August. Clearly, this is providential."

Prince Leopold was jubilant at the prospect of securing Bach as director of his musicians. He wrote at once and offered him the post at the generous salary of 400 thalers. Bach was then receiving 250 florins at Weimar.

Sebastian pondered deeply. He was greatly attracted by the idea, though he knew that the music at the court of Cöthen would be very different from that to which he was accustomed: almost entirely secular—that is, non-religious in character. He would not even have an organ to play on there, or at best a very inferior instrument.

Bach had determined early in life to devote himself to the music of the Church. Should he turn his back on this ideal now? It was a difficult question to decide, for there were many things to consider. Personally he felt himself warmly attracted to the young Prince; and he knew that at Cöthen he would receive the consideration and appreciation that his talents deserved.

Then too his family would greatly benefit by the change, by the increased salary and the higher standing that his new position would give him. Prince Leopold had even offered him lodging in his own palace.

Bach finally decided that he could not refuse the Prince's generous offer. On August 5th, 1717, he

officially accepted the position of *Kapellmeister* to Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen.

When Bach presented his resignation at Weimar and asked for his dismissal, Duke Wilhelm could not believe that he was serious. When he heard that Bach was planning to go into the service of the brother-in-law of his nephew, he scented the influence of August Ernst and refused to grant the dismissal.

Sebastian was in a quandary. He could not take up his new duties with Prince Leopold until he was officially discharged from Weimar—and the Duke refused to let him go.

Perhaps an unasked-for leave of absence would secure his dismissal.

He took "French leave" and went to Dresden.

. . . . .

Louis Marchand, organist at the court of France and composer of note, fell into disgrace at Versailles in 1717. He was highly considered in the musical world, but the flattery of his countrymen had spoiled him. He was so carried away by the high position to which he had attained that he began to neglect his family. This incensed the King and led to Marchand's temporary banishment from the court of France; he took advantage of his exile to travel. In



Germany his fame admitted him to every court, and in the fall of 1717 he visited Dresden.

Bach was already familiar with Marchand's music, and when he heard that the French composer was in Dresden he traveled there to make his acquaintance. Marchand, however, had never even heard of the organist from Weimar. All those who had listened to Bach's playing were enthusiastic in their praises, but outside of Thuringia and certain parts of Germany he was practically unknown; though in Dresden he was very highly thought of, and many considered his art superior to Marchand's.

The two musicians were introduced to each other by Count von Flemming, an ardent admirer of Bach. "You two should match your skill together!" the Count said with a smile.

Marchand's lip curled slightly. "Indeed—?" He adjusted his eyeglass carefully and examined this small-town musician who was being suggested as his competitor. Indeed, to a casual observer Marchand was infinitely the superior of the two. Sebastian, with his sober attire and quiet, dignified appearance, seemed no match for the elegant, sophisticated Frenchman, dressed in the height of fashion and with a courtier's polished manners.

Marchand bowed low to Count von Flemming. "I shall be glad to meet this—er—*gentleman* any

time you suggest. . . .” He drew out his snuff-box and helped himself with a studied gesture.

Count von Flemming smiled maliciously. “You have perhaps not heard our Bach play?”

The French musician bowed again and shook his head with a touch of contempt. “I have not had that pleasure.”

“Let us have a contest, then—on Thursday evening, shall we say? I will invite the most prominent musicians of Dresden to be the judges. You shall have a discriminating audience!”

Marchand was quite willing. He was always glad to show off his skill, and he felt sure that he could easily put down this country rival. It would be another laurel wreath for him!

The next day Bach played in the Sophienkirche for a few chosen friends. He had never owned a really good organ of his own, and when he had a chance to perform on a first-class instrument he was always stimulated to exceptional achievement. Those who then heard him called him “the prince of organists,” “the finest player ever known”; and even Mattheson declared that Bach was the only man who could surpass his celebrated comrade, Georg Friedrich Händel. “I always play to the best musician in the world,” Bach once said. “He may not be there—but I play as if he were!”

On Thursday evening a brilliant company gathered at Count von Flemming's house to witness the contest between the two rivals. Bach's admirers felt sure that he would prove superior to the French musician; but there were a number of Marchand's supporters who were equally confident of their favorite's success. The competition had grown beyond the rivalry between the two men: it had assumed an international aspect—a contest between French and German music.

Bach arrived—but there was no sign of Marchand. They waited half an hour—an hour—and still the Frenchman did not appear. Finally the Count dispatched a footman to the latter's lodging place. The man returned to report that Marchand had disappeared, bag and baggage. That very afternoon, so said the inn-keeper, the French Excellency had started back in a great hurry for France.

The consternation among Marchand's friends was great; but Bach's supporters were jubilant. The case was clear: Marchand had evidently heard his rival play the day before, and realized that he stood no chance of winning the contest. Rather than admit defeat he had decamped. . . .

Bach played alone, and even the supporters of the absent Marchand had to admit that they had never

heard such playing. German music had proven itself superior, and Sebastian's fame spread still farther.

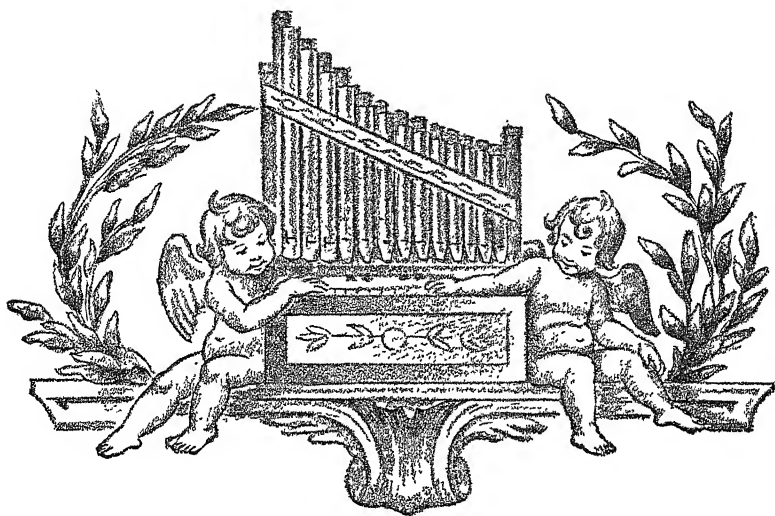
. . . . .

On Bach's return from Dresden he renewed his application for dismissal from Duke Wilhelm. The Duke, already annoyed at his Concertmeister's insistence, ordered the unruly musician placed under arrest. After Bach had been confined for a month, the Duke released him and asked if he would not reconsider his decision. But by that time Sebastian would not have remained at Weimar if it had been the last post in Thuringia.

When Duke Wilhelm saw there was no possibility of making him change his mind he finally granted him a grudging permission to retire.

It was with a heavy heart that Maria Barbara packed up their belongings and prepared for departure. She was not so happy over the change as her husband. The little house in Weimar had been home to them for nine long years now. Cöthen would be far away from the two little graves in the Weimar churchyard. . . .

As the door closed for the last time on the empty house, Maria Barbara was seized with a strange premonition. She felt as if she were shutting the door on her own life.



## CHAPTER XIII

### *Prince Leopold*

CATHARINA DOROTHEA BACH looked out of the window of Prince Leopold's castle and saw her youngest brother in the flower garden below. She hurried down and seized him by the arm. "*Nein, nein*, Bernhard, you must not pick the Prince's flowers!"

Little four-year-old Bernhard looked up at his sister with perplexed eyes. "The Prince *said* we might play in his garden—" he began.

"Yes, *play*, and it is very good of him to allow

us that privilege. But he would not wish us to pick his flowers!”

Bernhard fingered a rose longingly. “Not even one?”

His sister pulled his hand away. “You may smell them, *Brüderchen*.”

The child bent obediently down and drew in a long breath of perfume. “They smell like—*music*!” he whispered solemnly.

It was winter time when Bach and his family moved from Weimar to Cöthen. Prince Leopold generously offered them lodging in his own palace, and they occupied an apartment in the north wing of the vast Schloss.

From the windows of their new home Catharina Dorothea could see wide terraced gardens stretching out to the distant woods where Prince Leopold went to hunt. When the Bachs first arrived in Cöthen the walks and flower-beds were all lying under a mantle of snow. But when with the coming of spring the snow melted and the gardeners set out thousands of brilliant-colored flowers, Catharina Dorothea felt as if she were living on the edge of Paradise.

She was a big girl now—almost eleven years old—and her mother depended on her to look after her younger brothers.

“Where are Friedemann and Philipp Emanuel?”

she asked Bernhard, looking about the garden for the older boys.

Bernhard turned away from the flowers. "They have gone to the stables," he said, "and they wouldn't let *me* go with them!" His lip quivered. "They said I was too little."

His sister took him by the hand. "I will take you, *Herzchen*."

The older boys preferred the stables to the gardens. Prince Leopold kept a number of blooded horses and an elaborate collection of coaches. Friedemann and Philipp Emanuel never tired of watching the grooms rub down the sleek, satin-coated horses. Sometimes a soft-hearted stable-boy would lift one of the children to the back of a royal steed. What pride and power the boys felt then—as if they ruled the whole world from their strange, high seats!

Catharina Dorothea saw no signs of her brothers when she reached the stable yard, but she heard their voices from the depths of the coach-house.

"Halt, I say!" cried Friedemann in muffled tones. "We desire to descend. . . ."

"At once, your Majesty," answered Philipp Emanuel, "as soon as I can curb these fiery steeds!"

Little Bernhard ran into the coach-house and opened the door of the large carriage where the boys were playing. "Let me come too," he cried in high

glee. Though it was only the servants' carriage, he had never been in such a grand coach before. There were many others, the finest conveyance of all standing in a room by itself. Only on very special occasions did the Prince use this one. It was a very large coach, carved and gilded, with the Anhalt-Cöthen coat-of-arms emblazoned on the doors. Inside, the cushions were upholstered in fine velvet, and the floor was covered with a thick plush carpet. The groom showed them the leopard lap-robe which had been sent to the Prince from India to put over his knees when he rode in cold weather.

Maria Barbara hoped that her children's heads were not going to be turned by the luxury all about them. She was beginning, too, to worry a little about the future. Sebastian loved his children dearly, but he was too busy to give much attention to the material details of their life. And he himself was in many ways so much like a child—depended so much on his wife. . . . If anything should happen to her, what *would* become of them?

. . . . .

Bach found himself in an entirely new environment at Cöthen. Prince Leopold was not interested in religious music. He had been brought up in the strict Calvinistic church where elaborate services with long musical accompaniments were not approved.



Only the stern psalm tunes of the Reformation were allowed in the bare, ugly chapel of the palace.

Bach was therefore obliged to turn his talents in a new direction. The Prince maintained a small but select orchestra, and it was his custom to have them perform for him each evening in the candle-lit drawing-room of the castle's south wing. Leopold frequently joined the players himself on his violin or viola.

Sebastian found comparatively few compositions suitable for these concerts. With the exception of Corelli in Italy, Lully in France, and Purcell in England, hardly any musicians had produced orchestral works of value. The Church, before Bach's time, had not looked favorably on secular music, and since it was the Church that governed all human activities, the composers had devoted themselves almost entirely to religious forms.

The possibilities of chamber music, in which a small group of stringed or wood instruments played to a limited audience, remained almost unexplored territory. Many of the instruments used in our present-day orchestra were then unknown. The violin had come into existence only a century before Bach's birth, perfected during the early 17th century by Stradivarius, Amati, and Guarnerius. Bach himself invented a new instrument resembling the viola—the

five-stringed *viol pomposa*; and the problem of blending different instruments in an orchestral ensemble appealed strongly to his genius. He set himself to the composition of orchestral music with the same determination and enthusiasm which had made him master of religious forms.

But if Bach had not gone to Cöthen he might never have been inspired to experiment in this type of music. During the Cöthen period he developed unsuspected new powers, and from this period in his life date practically all of his orchestral and chamber-music works, which—if he had written nothing else—would have assured his agelong fame. For today, among the Bach works most often heard in concerts by great orchestras are the violin concertos, the piano concertos, and the fine concerto for two violins.

. . . . .

Soon after Bach was settled at Cöthen a letter came to him from Johann Kuhnau, the Cantor of the Thomasschule in Leipzig, whom he had met in Halle the year before.

“A new organ has recently been completed at the University Church of Leipzig,” the Cantor wrote. “I have recommended that you be engaged to inspect it.”

In a few days the summons came from the Church Council, and Sebastian was flattered to find

that he was asked to be the sole examiner of the new instrument. While at Leipzig he visited Herr Kuhnau at the Thomasschule.

Herr Kuhnau had been Cantor there for over twenty years. All of his sons had enjoyed the privileges of an education at the Thomasschule, and later at the University of Leipzig.

Bach thought of his own growing family and sighed. There were not many educational opportunities at Cöthen. He began to wonder whether he had chosen wisely for the future good of his children in establishing himself there. But Prince Leopold's court held many advantages. The Prince was an indulgent and generous master, and he showered his Capellmeister with favors and constant evidences of his esteem. Sebastian's position at court was second only to that of the *Hof-Marschall*.

When Maria Barbara's seventh child was born, in November of 1718, Prince Leopold himself offered to stand sponsor to the boy.

"My sister, the Duchess Eleonore at Weimar, has written me that she will act as godmother," the Prince told Bach, "and my younger brother August will be second godfather if you wish."

Sebastian was well aware of the honor his Prince offered to him. But when he told Maria Barbara she did not respond with great enthusiasm. "It does not

seem right, Sebastian, that such simple folk as we should be so close to royalty!"

"Nonsense, my little Maria! Just because he is christened 'Leopold August' our son need not think he is the equal of princes!"

Maria Barbara shook her head with a sigh and looked down at the new-born son in her arms. "I fear it will bring him bad luck. . . ."

Little Leopold August did not long survive to boast of his royal godparents. Before the year was out Maria Barbara had lost her youngest son. It was almost more than she could bear. First the twins, and now her youngest! Maria Barbara was very tired these days. She sometimes wondered how she could go on. . . .

. . . . .

Prince Leopold frequently traveled in the spring or early summer to Carlsbad, in the south of Germany. This famous watering resort was the meeting place for all the fashionables of Europe, and during the season a gay assemblage of noblemen and ladies made merry while they drank the waters of Carlsbad and recounted to each other the events of the winter.

The spring after Bach's arrival in Cöthen he accompanied Prince Leopold on his yearly visit to Carlsbad, and while there he played for the Margrave of

Brandenburg. The latter was so impressed by the Prince's new *Kapellmeister* that he commissioned Bach to write six concertos for him. Bach was much gratified at this mark of favor from a prince of the royal blood. He gave the commission his best effort, and wrote his six famous "Brandenburg Concertos." These he sent to the Margrave three years later, with a respectful dedication written in French, in the elaborately respectful style of the period. But the Margrave of Brandenburg had already forgotten the humble *Kapellmeister* of Prince Leopold, and when the concertos arrived he glanced over them indifferently and put them away in a drawer where they remained until after his death. Thus the great Brandenburg Concertos were not even heard until many years later, when Bach himself was no longer living. "Monseigneur de Brandenburg"—as Bach addressed him in the French dedication—would have been mightily surprised had he been told that his chief claim on men's memory was to lie in his association with

"Your Royal Highness's most humble and obedient servant,

Jean Sebastian Bach."

. . . . .

During this period Georg Friedrich Händel was at the height of his brilliant career. Although a German by birth he was now firmly established in Eng-

land, and the favorite composer of the English people as well as of the Royal family. They showered him with marks of their esteem; he received liberal allowances from the Royal family, and his operas and various compositions also brought in a generous income. By contrast with most artists, he amassed a considerable fortune during his lifetime. While Bach was struggling in comparative poverty to bring up a large and growing family, Händel, who remained a bachelor, lived in ease and luxury—the spoiled idol of an adoring populace.

In 1719 King George I of England founded the Royal Academy of Music and appointed Händel as director, sending him to the Continent to procure the finest available singers for the production of his new operas. Händel visited all the leading capitals of Europe, collecting the finest talent they had to offer, and everywhere being fêted. On his way back to London he stopped for a short visit with his aged mother in Halle.

This place was only twenty miles distant from Cöthen, and when Bach heard that the famous composer was to be there, he asked Prince Leopold's permission to leave for a couple of days so that he might go to Halle and make Händel's acquaintance. The Prince gladly consented, and offered Bach one of his horses for the journey. Sebastian demurred at first,

but his master insisted; so the following morning saw him mounted and on his way to Halle. It was early in October, and the air was clear and sparkling; but Sebastian was not used to riding, and the horse's back seemed more tiring to him than the journey on foot would have been. Every half-hour or so he got down and led the horse for a few miles.

It was noon before he reached Halle. He was tired and sore, and before visiting Händel he stopped at the Inn to change his clothes and make himself presentable.

Then with high anticipation he hurried to the house of Händel's mother and lifted the brass knocker.

A little maid-servant opened the door a crack.

"I have come to see Herr Händel—" Bach began.

"He is not here," the girl replied shortly.

"Not here? But surely—I sent word that I was coming. . . . I am Herr Bach from Cöthen."

"Herr Händel left for England this morning." The servant girl shut the door sharply in his face.

Bach shook his head with a disappointed air and looked at the hat in his hand. Then he turned with a sigh and started back for Cöthen. After all—who was he to seek the friendship of such a distinguished man as His Excellency Georg Friedrich Händel?

. . . . .

Maria Barbara sat by the open window with her knitting and listened to the joyous voices of her children playing in the garden below. They were active children, all four of them, and it was hard to keep them in stockings. She was always knitting; how much more work she would have had if her three other little ones had lived!

Sebastian came in as pleased as a schoolboy over the prospect of a holiday.

"The Prince journeys to Carlsbad the last part of May. We have only a few days for our preparations. Are the new shirts ready, wife?"

Maria Barbara rose with difficulty and went over to a large chest of drawers. "They are ready, my Sebastian," she said, opening a drawer and bringing out six snowy shirts with fine pleated cambric ruffles which her clever fingers had sewed with loving care.

When Sebastian dressed himself for the journey, Maria Barbara fluttered about him with unusual concern. She supervised each little detail with anxious care—the set of his coat, the fall of the cambric ruffles around his wrists, the very angle of his hat.

Sebastian smiled at her. "What should I do without such an industrious, loving wife to look after me!" he said tenderly, lifting her face to kiss her good-by. "It has been a good life we have had together, eh, Maria Barbara?"



His wife's eyes filled with tears. "Aye, Sebastian, a good life—and you have been a kind husband!"

Bach held her close for a moment, then turned to go. The children clustered about his knees, each clamoring for the last farewell.

"*Auf Wiedersehen*," he waved gaily. "Be good children and take care of your mother. I shall see you again in a month at the most."

Maria Barbara smiled a wistful farewell. The same premonition that had seized her when she left Weimar filled her again with tragic foreboding. . . .

. . . . .

Prince Leopold remained in Carlsbad longer than he had intended, and it was early July before he returned to Cöthen with his attendants.

Bach hurried to his apartment in the north wing of the palace. A desolate little figure sat on the steps outside the door, weeping bitterly.

"Why, Bernhard," Sebastian exclaimed, gathering the boy into his arms, "what is the matter, little one?"

"*Ach*, Papa . . . !" the child sobbed; "we thought you would never come back! *Where have they taken our Mütterchen?*"

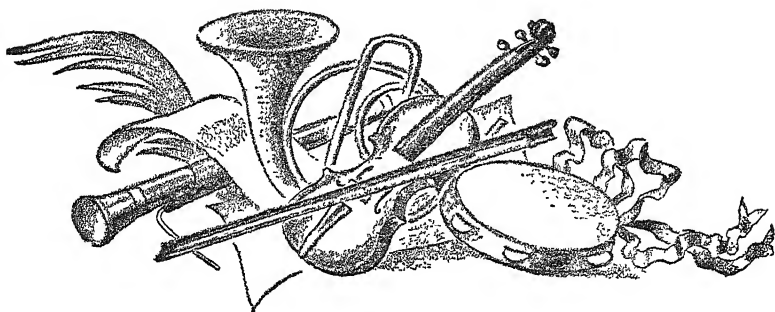
Bach stared at his son blankly, a terrible fear at his heart. "Your—mother . . . ?" he began faintly.

Bernhard buried his head on his father's shoulder. "They took her away—in a long, narrow box. . . ."

Bach gave a cry and sank weakly on the steps. Then he pulled himself together and went up to question the older children.

It was only too true. Maria Barbara had died suddenly a few days before, and her coffin was already buried in the churchyard near by.

Bach was left a widower with four small children to look after.



## CHAPTER XIV

### *Anna Magdalena*

**F**OR the first few weeks after Maria Barbara's death Sebastian was like a bewildered child. He had been blindly dependent on his wife's care and on her wise and sympathetic management of the household; the family seemed like a ship without a rudder now.

Catharina Dorothea tried to take her mother's place. "I will look after things for you, Father," she insisted bravely. But she was not quite twelve years old; in spite of her efforts and the services of a housekeeper things went very differently from the well-ordered days of Maria Barbara's rule.

Bach spent every moment of his spare time with the children now. They clung to him, and he to

them. He began to devote himself to their musical education.

"Come, Friedemann," he would call to his eldest son. "Let us see if you remember the exercise we wrote down yesterday!"

The children were always ready for music; Bach was a kind master who knew how to make the lessons interesting. Wilhelm Friedemann would run eagerly to the old clavier in the corner of the sitting-room and show his father how well he had learned his last lesson. Then he would bring out his music book and beg his father to write down something new.

Friedemann was very proud of this exercise book. It was his very own. On the front Bach had written in his best hand: "*Clavier-Büchlein vor Wilhelm Friedemann Bach. Angefangen in Cöthen den 22 Januar. Ao. 1720.*"\* Following this was the invocation which Bach never failed to inscribe in one form or another on all of his works: "*In Nomine Jesu.*"

First in the little book were written the musical clefs; then came exercises in fingering. Until Bach's day the thumb, since it was shorter than the other fingers, had been practically unused in playing. He devised a method which brought the thumb as well

\* Little clavier book for Wilhelm Friedemann Bach. Begun in Cöthen the 22nd of January, 1720.

as the rest of the fingers into use. Gradually all musicians came to adopt the same system, and this has been handed down, with only a few modifications, to the present time.

Following the exercises in fingering came a series of short pieces, a few by other composers, but most of them written by Bach himself for the instruction of his sons. The little paper-bound book contained 71 pages, and when it was finally completed it served for each of the younger children in turn.

Before each lesson the children were taught to bow their heads reverently and call on the name of Jesus to bless their work.

"It is only by the grace of God that we can learn," Bach told them with devout insistence. "Those who are arrogant and think they can do it all by themselves will never get far!"

When Friedemann had mastered all the exercises in the *Clavier-Büchlein* his father started him on a series of preludes and fugues which he had been composing for several years.

"They are not easy, Friedemann," he said. "But you will learn at least one valuable thing from them—how it is possible to write music in every key if only the clavier is correctly tuned."

At that time there were many controversies in regard to the tuning of harpsichords and claviers—to

"feather" or "quill" them, as it was called. Some musicians held that it was not only impossible but actually unnecessary for each interval to be exact so long as the more important keys were in tune.

"That is all nonsense," Bach insisted. "The tones of the clavier must be equal-tempered throughout"—that is, with the same interval of difference in pitch between every two neighboring half-tones.

His colleagues argued the question. "It is because you yourself have such a naturally perfect sense of pitch, Herr Bach," they protested. "For the average person such precision is not needed—indeed, it is well-nigh impossible!"

"I will prove that it can be done," Bach answered, and he set to work on a series of preludes and fugues written in all the keys, both major and minor. "*For the Well-tempered Clavichord*," they were inscribed. This collection is perhaps Bach's greatest contribution to pianoforte music, for it helped to establish a standard which has never changed since then.

Philipp Emanuel learned almost as quickly as Friedemann though he was three years younger. He showed special skill in composition and in later years became the most celebrated of Bach's sons on the Continent, though in England his brother Johann Christian—the "London Bach"—was the favorite.

Sebastian started his boys almost immediately on exercises in composition, though it was a long while before he allowed them to compose original pieces.

"First you must thoroughly learn the fundamentals," he admonished them. "You would not expect to write a letter before you knew your alphabet!"

"But see, Father!" Philipp Emanuel cried, running to the clavier and playing a melody of his own invention; "this will make a lovely fugue. . . ."

"That is no way to compose!" his father said severely. "Composition should be done away from the clavier. It is only lazy people who try to make their *fingers* do the work instead of their *minds*. 'Clavier-horsemen'—that is all that fingers are, running wildly up and down the keys in search of inspiration."

If Bach's pupils brought him work that did not measure up to his standards he would tear it across and hand it back to them with a frown of displeasure. "Never write down anything unless you have something really original to say. There is too much poor stuff in the world already!"

. . . . .

Three months had passed now since Maria Barbara's death, but still Bach could not seem to throw off his despondency. Prince Leopold was distressed

to see his Capellmeister so sad, and tried to think of some way to cheer him.

"You need a holiday, *Herr Kapellmeister!*" he said finally. "A change of scene would do you good. How about a little trip to Hamburg? You said not long ago that you wished you might meet old Reincken once again before he died."

Bach did not see how he could get away. "There are my duties here, your Highness," he began.

"The Concertmeister can attend to them during your absence," the Prince insisted graciously.

Bach thanked his royal master, but still he did not believe he could leave the children.

When Catharina Dorothea heard of the Prince's suggestion she urged her father to go. "We shall be quite all right, dear Father," she said. "Perhaps Aunt Maria Salome could come to stay with us, or Godmother Dorothea from Ohrdruf. But even if we are alone I can keep the house in order and manage the children."

Bach smiled fondly at his young daughter. Always Catharina Dorothea was the responsible one of the family, the one he could depend on. She never left her father to seek a home and husband elsewhere; in later years she was the mainstay of Sebastian's household. So Bach finally decided to take a holiday,



and in October he left for a six weeks' trip to Hamburg.

Reinken, the veteran organist of the Catharinenkirche there, was now nearly ninety-eight years of age, but still alert and in possession of his faculties. The first time Bach had visited Hamburg he was only an apprentice in Lüneburg; now he felt he could meet the aged master on very different terms.

"You will not remember me, sir," he told Herr Reinken, "but I came to see you nearly twenty years ago, when I was a member of the St. Michael's choir in Lüneburg."

Reinken peered at him closely through eyes grown dim by long years at the organ. "I have not forgotten," he chuckled. "And now you are the celebrated Herr Bach whose praises everyone is singing! They say that even the great Marchand was afraid of you!" He laughed—a thin, cracked laugh. "Come, I should like to hear whether it is true, what they say about your playing!"

They went over to the Catharinenkirche, and Bach helped the old man up the steep, winding steps to the organ loft. Above the instrument a group of gilded cherubs looked down inquisitively at the two musicians; they had heard many organists, but never one who could compare with the quiet, sober-faced man who sat there now.

Bach bowed his head a moment in prayer. It did him good to touch an organ again. Church music was, after all, the work closest to his heart. At Cöthen he had sorely missed his organ.

He began to improvise on a sixteenth-century melody, "*An Wasserflüssen Babylon*," which Reinken also had set to music. Variation followed variation; there seemed to be no end to Bach's creative flow. Reinken sat lost in wonder. When the younger musician had finished playing he embraced him with emotion.

"I thought this art was dead," he said. "But I see it still lives in you. . . ."

. . . . .

Bach returned to Cöthen a few days before Prince Leopold's birthday. During his absence he had written a new Cantata in honor of the event, and he prepared to rehearse it as soon as he arrived.

The Prince came in as Bach was assembling his orchestra and giving out the parts to the various singers. "There is a young soprano from Anhalt-Zerbst who has come over to assist us," he told his *Kapellmeister*.

Bach was annoyed. "But we have good singers here, your Highness," he said. "Is it really necessary to bring in outsiders?"

The Prince considered a moment. "Perhaps

not," he agreed. "We heard this young singer at our cousin's court in Anhalt-Zerbst, and thought her voice singularly pleasing. Her father is a musician of some note—Court Trumpeter at Weissenfels, I believe, Wülcken by name." Bach looked up sharply. "However, if you prefer," the Prince continued, "you can send her back. . . ."

Wülcken—trumpeter—Weissenfels! All at once Bach was back in the jasmine-scented hall at Weissenfels, preparing to direct the Cantata he had written in honor of Duke Christian's birthday. "This is my Anna Magdalena, *Herr Concertmeister*," he seemed to hear Herr Wülcken say. Then the sweet tones of the girl's voice echoed again in his heart. Could it be possible that the new singer was the same maiden he had met four years before?

In the next moment Prince Leopold was presenting the girl to him, and he found himself looking into the flower-like face of Anna Magdalena herself. She smiled in pleased recognition.

"I was so glad when I heard that you were *Kapellmeister* here, Herr Bach," she said with a blush. "I have always hoped that some day—" She broke off in confusion, dismayed by her temerity in addressing the great Bach so familiarly.

Sebastian was surprised at the pleasure he felt in meeting this young girl again. For the first time

since Maria Barbara's death he felt his heart a little less heavy. Life seemed at last to hold a new interest.

. . . . .

Anna Magdalena continued to come to Cöthen occasionally, and each time he saw her Bach was more impressed by her character. There was something about the girl's modest, quiet disposition and also the real beauty of her voice that drew all people to her.

She looked up to Bach with unbounded admiration. When he went out of his way to show her some small favor, or singled her out for special consideration, her happiness was complete.

One day as Anna Magdalena was hurrying to the palace for a rehearsal, she heard the sound of weeping. Beneath a large linden tree with fragrant drooping branches, a small boy was stretched out on the grass, crying bitterly. Anna Magdalena, who loved children better than anything else in the world, bent over the boy.

"Don't cry so, little one!" she said tenderly. "Tell me what is wrong."

The boy only sobbed the harder. "Go away," he cried fiercely. "You are not my mother. I want my mother!"

Anna Magdalena suddenly recognized the *Kapellmeister's* youngest son. "Poor child!" she said gently, putting her arms about him. "Your mother

has not really left you—she is still with you in spirit. You can talk to her, and she will hear you.”

“But I want to *see* her!”

Anna Magdalena looked about in search of inspiration. “How would you like to go into the forest for a holiday tomorrow?”

Five-year-old Bernhard sat up and examined the stranger lady through his tears. The survey must have satisfied him, for in a moment he put his hand into hers with a sigh of content. “It would be nice to go into the forest,” he said gravely. “Mother used to take us. . . .”

After that, whenever Anna Magdalena came over to sing at Cöthen she brought some trifle for Bach’s motherless children, and occasionally took them for a little outing in the fields or woods.

Sebastian was touched by her kindness. Like all of the great Bach clan he lived principally in and for his family. It was cruelly hard for him to have his wife gone and his children lacking the direction of a mother. He would watch Anna Magdalena wistfully and wish she were not so young.

One day as she was preparing to take the children into the woods he approached her almost timidly. “Would you care if I came with you?” he asked awkwardly.

Anna Magdalena blushed. “Why—certainly I

shouldn't, *Herr Kapellmeister*, if you really want to share our humble company and still humbler picnic basket!"

Bach smiled at her suddenly in the way that endeared him to all his friends. His countenance was so very sober generally—almost severe in its expression. If it had not been for the winning smile which lit up his face on rare occasions he might have been taken for a stern man of hard, unbending character.

"A day in the woods with you and the children would mean real comfort and refreshment for me," he said earnestly. "There are times when I feel that I must leave everything and go out into the open for new inspiration."

Anna Magdalena nodded a grave and understanding assent.

"The forest has always seemed to me like a great cathedral," Bach went on. "God's voice is clearest there. . . ."

It was late in the spring of 1721, almost a year since the death of Maria Barbara. The countryside had never been so lovely; the fields were waist-high in wild flowers, and even the moss in the forest was spangled with tiny blossoms.

After all, Bach thought, he had much to be thankful for: four healthy children, a good position, his music . . . and Anna Magdalena! He looked

at the girl gravely, with a sudden realization of what she had come to mean to him.

They ate their lunch beneath a giant oak, at the side of a little brook in the beautiful Thuringian forest. Cold sausage, bread, and cheese—and as a surprise for the children Anna Magdalena had brought some gingerbread cakes cut into fancy shapes. The boys pounced on them with greedy cries of delight. Catharina Dorothea was less noisy in her appreciation, but her eyes shone at the sight of the unexpected treat. When the last crumbs had disappeared, the three boys and their sister ran off to hunt for wild strawberries while Sebastian stretched out on the soft green moss beneath the tree.

He looked over at the little stream beside them. "How clear and deep this brook runs," he said musingly. "Born of the mountain snows, flowing to the sea. . . ."

Anna Magdalena took out her knitting and began to work. From the distance came the happy voices of the children through the trees.

"Do you hear how the brook sings on its way?" Sebastian was silent for a moment. "I have often thought it significant that my name should be 'Bach,' " he said presently. "I should like to be like this brook—to flow deep and crystal-clear, to refresh others along the way, to go singing to the sea."

Anna Magdalena caught her breath. She had never seen this tender side of Bach before. Now she realized that underneath his outer gravity lay a warm and sensitive nature.

Sebastian turned suddenly to his companion. "You have been very good to the children, Fräulein Anna Magdalena," he said gently.

The girl flushed with pleasure. "But I love them, *Herr Kapellmeister*. Anyone would be good to such lonely, motherless children."

Bach raised himself on his knees and looked searchingly into the girl's eyes. "They would no longer be lonely—or I either—if only *you* would be their mother!"

Anna Magdalena looked at him in startled surprise. He took both her hands in his. "I have been like an old, useless man since Maria Barbara's death, though I am really only thirty-six. Do you think you could—" Suddenly he loosed her hands and sank back on the ground. "No, it would not be right. You are so young yet, with all of life before you."

The girl's breath came quickly, and the color rose again in her cheeks. When he released her hands she spoke at last. "Do you mean—" Her voice was very low. "Do you mean that you would want me for—your wife?"

Bach's head was turned away now. "Forgive



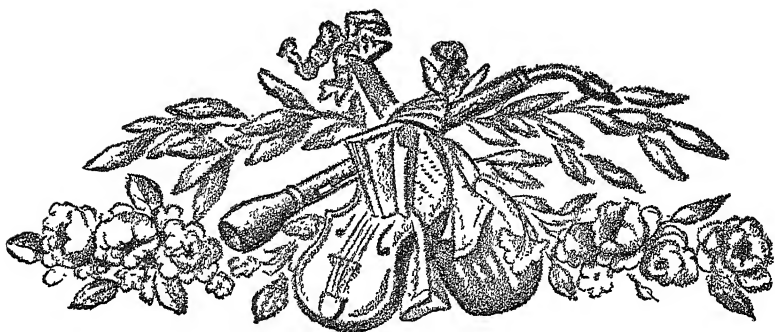
me, child," he said sadly. "I should not have allowed myself to think of such a thing."

He did not see the light in Anna Magdalena's eyes. "And you really think," she whispered, one hand over her heart, "that I am *worthy* to be your wife?"

Sebastian turned quickly, and she dropped her eyes in confusion.

"*Worthy!*" Bach could hardly trust himself to speak. "It is *I* who am unworthy!" He looked at her imploringly. "Would you really be willing to take on the burden of four children—a broken husband—?"

"*Hush!*" Anna Magdalena said softly. She had forgotten her timidity now. There was a look in Sebastian's eyes that made her think of a hurt child longing, hoping, to be comforted. "You must not say such things," she went on tenderly. "I should consider it a great honor to become your wife."



## CHAPTER XV

### *A New Life*

**A** NEW life began for Bach with his betrothal to Anna Magdalena. He had loved his first wife devotedly, but with a far different sentiment from what he now felt for the joyous young creature who had promised to become his bride. Maria Barbara had been older than Sebastian, and she had mothered him as if he were one of her own children; whereas Anna Magdalena was full of the freshness and ardor of youth, and Sebastian felt his own life renewed in her presence.

The gloom of recent months seemed dissipated now as if by magic, and all things appeared to conspire to bring him happiness.

A few weeks before the date he and Anna Magdalena had set for their marriage, Sebastian's aunt,

Frau Catharina Lämmerhirt, who had stood god-mother to Bach's first child, died at Erfurt and left him a handsome legacy of 500 thalers. He remembered how, at the time of his first marriage, the heritage from Uncle Tobias Lämmerhirt's estate had helped to set up his household.

When Sebastian went to Prince Leopold to tell him of his approaching marriage, the Prince was delighted at the news. He clapped his *Kapellmeister* genially on the shoulder. "I was hoping you would marry again, my Bach. You were never meant to stay single. The little Fräulein Wülcken, eh? A good choice—and she loves music! Tell me now, wasn't it her pretty voice that really won your heart?"

Bach laughed with his sovereign, and tried to explain that it was first of all the sweetness of her character that had drawn him to Anna Magdalena.

The Prince cut short his rhapsodies. "Now that Fräulein Wülcken is to live permanently with us, we might as well appoint her one of our official singers. And her salary—how would, say, half of what you yourself are receiving suit you?"

Sebastian was touched at his Prince's generosity. He felt rich indeed now, with his own ample salary, that of his wife, and the legacy from Aunt Catharina! Perhaps he could afford to give the children a real education now.

By special permission of Prince Leopold, Sebastian and Anna Magdalena were married on the morning of December 3d, 1721, in Bach's own lodging at the palace, and a few days after this quiet ceremony Prince Leopold celebrated his own marriage to his cousin, Friederica Henrietta of Anhalt-Bernburg.

The new Princess was passionately fond of amusement. To please his bride Prince Leopold organized a series of entertainments. For weeks the palace was illuminated nightly and echoed to an endless succession of balls, masquerades, theatricals, and occasional concerts.

Music, however—until that time the most important part of the life at court—was now seldom heard. It bored the Princess; she was hardly even interested in the ode which Bach set to music in her honor at the time of the wedding, and she resented the attachment which her husband so plainly showed for his *Kapellmeister*. It was soon apparent that Bach and his *Collegium Musicum* would occupy a very secondary place under the new régime.

But at first Sebastian was hardly conscious of this fact. His own happiness and the deep love that he felt for his young wife were all that counted for the moment. Once more his household was running smoothly and resounded with the merry laughter of his children and their young stepmother.

Every evening Sebastian hastened eagerly homeward, and in the morning he left with reluctance. His felicity was so complete that it made him almost afraid. Surely such happiness could not last!

But he need not have feared. His love for Anna Magdalena endured through all the long years they shared together. Four years after their marriage he copied out in a small music-book which he had made for her use a poem written to his bride on their wedding-day. It stands as a memorial to the faithful love and devotion which he never ceased to hold for Anna Magdalena:

Your servant, sweetest maiden bride:  
Joy be with you this morning!  
To see you in your flowery crown  
And wedding-day adorning  
Would fill with joy the sternest soul.  
What wonder, as I meet you,  
That my fond heart and loving lips  
O'erflow with song to greet you?

. . . . .

"Why do you look so sad, my Sebastian?" Anna Magdalena asked her husband as she sat over her sewing one late fall evening nearly a year after their marriage.

Bach puffed at his pipe and smiled at his bride. "I'm not sad," he returned. "How could I be, with

you beside me? But it's true that certain points in our situation here are worrying me a little."

Anna Magdalena gave an understanding nod. "I know. It has not escaped my notice how our Prince has changed."

"It is his feather-brained bride who has changed him!" Bach declared loyally. "In his heart Prince Leopold still has the same feeling for music, and for me."

"The Princess is an *amusa*," Anna Magdalena declared. "She cares for nothing but an endless round of gaiety and pleasure."

Bach sighed. "Our Prince no longer needs a *Kapellmeister*."

His wife echoed his sigh. "Rather a Master of Ceremonies to devise some new amusement for his lady wife every single day!"

"Then there is another matter, Magdalena," Bach went on, "that has been troubling me of late. Wilhelm Friedemann is getting to be a big boy—nearly thirteen now; Philipp Emanuel will soon be ten; and even little Bernhard is eight years old. We must think of their future."

Anna Magdalena knew that her husband had frequently deplored the lack of educational facilities in Cöthen.

"There is no university in Cöthen, and not even

a good higher school," Bach continued. "It has always been my greatest regret that *I* was not able to go to a university. I might have accomplished something worth while in life if that opportunity had been given me. . . ."

Anna Magdalena smiled to herself over her sewing. University or no university, *she* knew that her beloved husband was the greatest man who had ever lived. But she also knew better than to say this to him. One of the rare occasions when she had seen him angry was when she had ventured to express this opinion. "*I—great?*" Sebastian had exclaimed with genuine heat. "Your love for me is carrying you away, my little one. Don't ever say such a foolish thing again. I am only a humble tool in the hands of the Almighty. Whatever He wills, I shall accomplish. But it will be His doing, not mine!"

So Anna Magdalena made no reply to her husband's remark.

In a moment Bach continued. "My sons must be more fortunate than I was . . ."

"They are fortunate in being your sons," his wife answered softly. "I hope, Sebastian," she said, "that our first baby will be a boy."

. . . . .

A few days later Bach received a letter from the famous musician Telemann, whom he had met in

Hamburg. On reading it he exclaimed to his wife:

"Herr Kuhnau of the Thomasschule in Leipzig is dead! And now the post there is left vacant." He looked again at the letter. "Herr Telemann says that he was offered the position of Cantor there, but refused because it included teaching the boys and various other duties he did not care to undertake. He asks whether I would be interested in the post."

Anna Magdalena clapped her hands together joyously. "Oh, don't you see, my husband, that this is the hand of Providence? When you visited the Thomasschule last year you said it was an ideal place for a boy's education. And not only that, but Leipzig has one of the finest universities in Germany!"

Bach felt his own enthusiasm mounting. "That is true. I could never find a better place for our sons. But I wish there were not this teaching connected with the position. I remember my trials with the choir boys of the Bonifaciuskirche in Arnstadt!"

Anna Magdalena laughed at him mockingly. "But think how young you were then. And you know, there will be drawbacks to any position."

Bach stared out of the window at the snow-covered garden. "Heaven knows there are drawbacks enough here," he said thoughtfully. Then he turned suddenly to his wife. "Bring me the quills and some paper, Magdalena. I shall write at once and make



application for the post of Cantor at the Thomas-schule."

. . . . .

In February Bach went up to Leipzig to take his *Probe*, or tryout, for the position at the Thomas-schule. He passed his test with brilliant success, but it was April before the Council of Leipzig indicated their willingness to accept him.

He went immediately to Prince Leopold to ask for his dismissal.

The Prince was sitting at the desk in his writing-room when Bach was ushered in.

"I have come, your Highness," he began reluctantly, "to ask permission to withdraw from your service."

Prince Leopold looked at him sadly. "I have been expecting this," he said with a sigh.

"Please do not think, Excellency," Bach said quickly, "that I am not grateful for all the favors you have shown to me and to my family. But you see—" he fingered the buttons on his waistcoat nervously, "you see the children are growing up. They need special schooling. And then," he looked quizzically at the Prince, "you really have no need of a *Kapellmeister* now."

Prince Leopold took up his quill pen and drew out a sheet of parchment paper. "I quite understand,

my Bach. You shall have your wish, but you must at least remain my honorary *Kapellmeister*."

By a curious turn of fate the Prince's wife, who was perhaps chiefly responsible for Bach's withdrawal from Cöthen, died suddenly a few days before his departure. But by that time all his plans were made to go to Leipzig, and his bond to the Council of the Thomasschule was signed. He could not have remained in Cöthen had he wished.



## CHAPTER XVI

### *The Thomasschule*

**L**EIPZIG in 1723 was one of the fairest and most up-to-date cities in all Germany. Outside the walls, and even within the city, long avenues of lime trees made cool and fragrant shade during the summer months. The streets were broad and well-cobbled—even the narrowest was wide enough for the passage of an ox-cart—and they were cleaned and flushed with water from the numerous public fountains.

The houses were many-storied, gabled and richly ornamented, decorated with flower-boxes full of

sweet-smelling blossoms, and hung with cages of singing birds. The public buildings were even more ornate in architecture, and many were covered with bright-colored frescoes. Several large open-air markets, as well as coffee and beer houses, added a festive note to the appearance of the city.

Sebastian and Anna Magdalena never tired at first of walking through the spacious streets and admiring the beautiful city. It was even possible to walk at night in Leipzig, for seven hundred oil lamps on oak standards were lighted every evening along the streets, and there was a watchman for each district of the city who told the hours of the night and shook his rattle as he passed to frighten robbers away.

The school of St. Thomas was among the oldest in Leipzig. It had been founded several hundred years before, in 1212, to train singers for the church choirs and perambulating choruses of the city. The scholars boarded in the school next to the Thomas-kirche, while the Rector and the Cantor each occupied an apartment in the same building.

The church and school were just inside the city's west wall. From the windows of his apartment Bach could look out on the narrow Pleisse River and the fields and gardens beyond. Close by, an ancient mill-wheel clattered a creaking accompaniment to the singing of the choir boys.

Anna Magdalena was so enthusiastic about their new home that she failed to notice its less desirable features. Cantor Kuhnau, Bach's predecessor, had lived there for twenty years with his eight children. At his death the apartment was entirely renovated, scrubbed, and whitewashed.

"See, Sebastian!" his wife cried, "there is even a fine new oven, and a wash-room! Here shall be your study, in this long narrow room overlooking the river; here we shall put our big double-bed."

On June 1st, 1723, Bach was formally introduced to the Thomasschule. All of the students and masters, the Pastor, and the Town Clerk representing the City Council gathered for the occasion in the *Aula*, or upper auditorium, of the school. Then the door opened and a short, rather stout man of thirty-eight appeared.

He was dressed in sober black, and his heavy gray wig in the elaborate style of the period made his massive head look even larger than it was. His bearing was dignified, and the strong outward thrust of his chin gave his features a look of strong determination. Long years of poring over manuscripts had brought an intense, almost stern look to his eyes, but to those who looked closely there was a twinkle in their corners.

The whole school rose and sang a welcoming

chorus to the new Cantor. Then the Town Clerk made a long speech extolling the former Cantor, Herr Kuhnau, and reading a list of Bach's duties. Sebastian promised to serve his new masters diligently, and perform his obligations with conscientious and reverent care. More singing followed, there was a formal presentation of the new Cantor, and the ceremony ended.

. . . . .

Bach returned to his apartment with a printed copy of the rules and regulations he was expected to follow.

Anna Magdalena found him poring over this list, an anxious frown on his face.

"It will not be a bed of roses, Magdalena," he told his wife. "Four hours of teaching every day, supervising and rehearsing the boys. And much work in composition! At least one new Cantata a month, Christmas and Easter music, the Passion music for Good Friday, and special music for other church festivals; music for funerals and weddings—I wonder whether I shall ever be able to manage it all!"

Anna Magdalena stroked his hand reassuringly. "Of course you can, my Sebastian. Music flows from your pen like the stream from a waterfall. As for the other duties, you will soon become accustomed to the routine."

Sebastian looked up at her with his sudden smile—like the sun coming out from behind the clouds. “Of course it will all work out. If only—” he looked again at the paper in his hand, “—if only I can manage the boys, and satisfy their Honors, the worshipful Council of Leipzig!”

. . . . .  
“Wake up, Friedemann!” Philipp Emanuel called. “The bell is ringing; it is nearly five o’clock and we must be ready for prayers in fifteen minutes.”

It was barely light in the little room where the three boys slept. The rays of the rising sun had just begun to creep over the horizon. Friedemann, who was inclined to be lazy, rolled over with a groan and gave his younger brother, Bernhard, an awakening shove. Then all three boys fell out of bed and began to dress hurriedly.

From the room above they could hear their father and Anna Magdalena moving about, and the fretful cries of the new stepsister, little Christiane. The city of Leipzig was already astir. Across the way the clatter of the mill broke the still morning air. An occasional ox-cart rumbled along the streets, and a few early street-venders began to shout their wares.

“I *hate* this place!” Friedemann exclaimed pettishly. “Always hurry and scramble and noise! In Cöthen now . . .”

Little eight-year-old Bernhard began to cry. The tears filled his eyes and splashed over on his cheeks; but he had no time to wipe them off. "I wish we were *home*—in Cöthen!" he wailed.

Friedemann kicked the wall of the room vindictively. "So do I! No horrid rising bells there, or cross masters. What's this old Thomasschule good for, anyhow! Nothing but lessons and singing all day long."

Philipp Emanuel, who had finished dressing, looked at his brother severely. "I suppose you'd like to grow up without *any* education, wouldn't you! Father says we are very lucky to be in one of the best schools in Germany, with a chance to go to the University afterwards."

Bernhard sighed as he pulled on his small trousers. "It wouldn't be so bad if only we had a garden here," he said wistfully.

"Hurry, boys," Bach's voice called down from the floor above. "You must not be late for prayers."

The loud clang of the bell sounded at that moment, and the boys seized their Bibles and hymn-books and hastened upstairs to the *Coenaculum*, or practice-room, on the second floor. Here the rest of the school was assembled, ready for the morning hymn and prayers which always began the day.

When prayers were ended it was past five-thirty,



and time for breakfast. While the boys were eating, Bach read aloud a chapter from the Bible. Then masters and pupils went to their various classes, beginning every period with the singing of a hymn.

Bach always dreaded these periods. He was not gifted as a teacher, save in music; his discipline of the boys was poor; and the hours of teaching were an intolerable burden to him.

At eleven the noon meal was served—soup, boiled meat or sausage, rough bread and potatoes, with sauerkraut and a dessert as an occasional treat. During this meal again the boys were forbidden to talk, but must listen to further exhortations from the Scriptures. After dinner the Cantor rehearsed his singers in the Cantata they were to sing the following Sunday. Then came more lessons until three.

There was very little leisure at the Thomaschule. In the afternoons, when classes were ended, there were often weddings or funerals to take up the spare hours. Supper was at six, with more Bible reading, and studying afterwards for the next day's lessons.

Prayers again at eight, and immediately afterwards they went to bed, where, the Rector urged, they must before going to sleep "reflect on the day's happenings and lessons, and discover the path of prudence and godliness."

Bach's sons found life at the Thomasschule very different from the happy-go-lucky days at Cöthen. It was not easy for Friedemann and his two brothers to adjust themselves to the new existence.

The pupils at the school were hostile to the strangers on principle, and lost no opportunity to make fun of them. Friedemann was outraged by the gibes that were poked at his country manners. He was finally moved to overcome his natural indolence and show these tyrants a thing or two. He went at his studies with such fierce determination that by the end of the year he had finished the preparatory work at the Thomasschule and was ready, at thirteen, to enter the University. Sebastian had great hopes for his eldest son. But in later years Friedemann failed to live up to his early promise, though Bach fortunately did not live to see the tragedy of this son's later life.

Philipp Emanuel was more sensitive than his brother, and he suffered acutely during the first weeks at the Thomasschule. But in the long run he profited the most of all Bach's sons from his opportunities in Leipzig.

Bernhard had not yet given signs of the weak character which later was destined to be the cause of the greatest sorrow of his father's life. At that time he was almost too young to enter actively into the lessons at the Thomasschule, but his clear, well-trained

voice won him a prominent place among the sopranos of the *Chorus Primus*, or first choir.

Shortly before the arrival of Bach and his family in Leipzig, the Thomasschule had printed a book of regulations. Sebastian urged his sons to study the rules and memorize the most important passages:

The bell rings at 5 A.M. in summer and 6 A.M. in winter, when every scholar rises, washes, brushes his hair, and is ready at the quarter-hour to attend prayers, bringing his Bible with him. Clothes, shoes, stockings, and linen must be clean and tidy. No lights may be used in the dormitories. . . . Before retiring to rest the lessons of the day should be recalled, with thanks to God for the knowledge acquired. The walls must not be disfigured with charcoal drawings or writing. Locks, windows, and keys that are broken must be replaced at the delinquent's cost. Doors must be kept open in summer; noise and disorder are to be avoided. None may remain away at night without express permission. . . . Absence for a week entails the loss of free board altogether. Such as absent themselves for a month are expelled, unless they can explain their conduct satisfactorily. Before leaving the school, the scholar must state his reason in writing, give up the key of his cubicle to the Rector, and take away nothing that is not his own. He who runs away without explanation is posted on the notice-board and expelled with ignominy.

Grace is said before and after morning and evening meals by the scholar whose turn it is to do so, the others repeating the words after him. During meals a Psalm, or

chapter from the Bible, or another edifying book, is read. Plates and spoons must not be removed from the table. The seniors are not to be helped more liberally than the rest: their preference causes discontent. A meal may not be taken outside the school without permission.

The prescribed uniform is a respectable black cloth suit and cloak, and is imperative at funerals. The scholars follow at funerals in the order in which they sit in class, and their singing must display "*eine richtige Consonanz*."

On Sundays the scholars assemble quietly in the *coenaculum*, and a quarter of an hour before the time for service proceed to church, where they remain seated on their benches at the back of the gallery till summoned to their singing-desks at the front. After the Cantata the Praecentor, Tenors, and Bases may remain at the balustrade at the front of the gallery. The rest return to their benches at the back and listen to the sermon and the prayers that follow it, proceeding thereafter to the front to sing. Food may not be taken into church. To leave church without permission before the service is ended is punished with a birching. . . .

On the occasion of weddings and other festivities it is customary for special victuals to be provided for the choir's consumption, but money may be given instead, and will be credited to the fund out of which the scholars' meals are provided.

The boys at the Thomasschule were given board and lessons free in return for their services as singers. In addition to this they shared in the fees of the Currende—fees for weddings, funerals, etc.

Insubordination was frequently punished by birching, though in addition to this a series of fines covered almost every form of misdemeanor:

1. For losing the key or leaving it in the door . . . . . 4 groschen\*
2. For failing to shut the door when last to leave the room . . . . . 2 “
3. For being sick (*quí vomitat*) . . . . . 2 “
4. For swearing, loud, or improper speech . . . 6 pfennig
5. For impertinent language, in Latin or German . . . . . 6 “
6. For not getting up in the morning and missing prayers . . . . . 3 “
7. For not tidying the cubicle before 10 in summer and 12 in winter . . . . . 6 “

There were also fines for tardiness, for quarreling, for speaking German instead of Latin at certain hours, for noisy conduct, for stealing, and for mistakes in singing. Always music was most important of all. The boys in the Thomasschule were graded according to their musical ability, and the best sang in the first chorus, which Bach himself directed.

. . . . .

On Sunday mornings the members of the Thomasschule were obliged to rise even earlier than on week-days. First they must attend the early service

\* A groschen was about ten pfennig, or 2½ cents.

or Matins at 5:30 A.M., where the choir of the Thomasschule furnished the music either at the Thomaskirche or, on alternate Sundays, at the Nicolaikirche. The service started with the singing of the psalms, a reading of the Gospel in both Latin and German, the *Te Deum* performed by choir and organ, more singing, and finally the *Benedicamus*.

Then at 7 A.M. came the main worship, which lasted through all the morning hours, and sometimes until close to two o'clock in the afternoon. The sermon was exactly an hour long, and the pastor timed his preaching by the sand in an hour-glass on his pulpit. He was allowed a box of snuff with which to refresh himself during the sermon.

After the sermon came the long Communion celebration. The duration of the service depended on the number of communicants and the season of the year. On special feast-days the ceremonies were much more elaborate and correspondingly longer, especially at Christmas time, Easter, and Whitsuntide, when they lasted for three days.

These long hours spent in church were severe discipline for active, growing boys, particularly during the winter months when the cold in the large, unheated churches was almost unbearable. Occasionally the younger pupils were allowed a respite if the inspector pronounced the cold too severe, in which case

they could then return to the school during the sermon period, and listen there to a reading of the sermon. During the week each boy must write out in full his recollection of the previous Sunday's sermon.

On Sunday afternoons there was a Vesper service, with more singing by the St. Thomas choir. At this time it was the custom to perform a Motet in addition to the hymns and other singing.

The principal music of the day was the Cantata, sung at the morning service. This served as an introduction to the sermon and consisted of a Gospel text set to music. Each Sunday a different "musical sermon" was sung, with special Cantatas for the three festivals of the Virgin, of St. Michael, and of St. John the Baptist, for New Year's Day, Ascension, Epiphany, and the anniversary of the Reformation.

Bach's five years at Cöthen had been almost entirely given over to orchestral and secular compositions. But now that he was once more free to devote himself to religious forms, a mighty succession of masterpieces came rushing from his pen, as if some vast reservoir of his inner being had, during the years at Cöthen, gradually filled with inspiration and now at last was opened. While in Leipzig he composed—not counting secular music and pieces for the clavier, orchestra, and other instruments—265 cantatas,

21 Latin church services, 5 masses, and 6 motets, and a magnificat.

Bach's most original contribution to music was undoubtedly his development of the fugue. This form of music consists of a simple melody which is taken up by several different voices in both treble and bass clef, and woven into an intricate pattern. Bach lifted the form from a mere technical exercise to a thing of rare brilliance and beauty. Yet his famous collection of preludes and fugues was not made public until fifty years after his death. Only seven of his works were printed during his lifetime.

. . . . .

Everything that Sebastian wrote was sacred to Anna Magdalena. Her love for his music seemed almost excessive at times; she did not even find the long Sunday services tiresome, for then she could steep her whole soul in the harmonies of her beloved husband's composing. That, to her, was true religion.

"I come closer to God through your music, my Sebastian, than through all the sermons I have ever heard!"

Bach never failed to chide such heresy, though indeed in his own heart he liked to believe that God spoke through his music.

Every church season brought its special music to delight Anna Magdalena, but she particularly



looked forward to the Lenten season with its glorious culmination to weeks of fasting and prayer in the Passion music of Good Friday.

The practice of chanting the story of the Passion during Holy Week dated from the early days of the Church, this Passion music being sung at the Vesper service on Good Friday afternoon. Bach greatly elaborated the style of this music. He composed four Passions, according to the four Gospels, but the greatest of these is the *Passion According to St. Matthew*.

Anna Magdalena heard snatches of this Passion music while Bach was at work in his narrow *Componierstube*, or Study, at the Thomasschule, and she attended some of the rehearsals with him. It was the most elaborate and ambitious work he had ever attempted. He had scored it for two choirs, two organs, two orchestras, and a number of soloists. Even by using all the available musicians of Leipzig it was hard to do such a masterpiece justice.

Bach rehearsed his choirs and orchestras for weeks beforehand, and when Good Friday came he and his whole family went to the Thomaskirche to witness and take part in the St. Matthew Passion.

Bach himself stood in the choir loft, directing the musicians and singers, and his three elder sons sang in the Chorus Primus. Below in the nave of the church sat Anna Magdalena with young Gott-

fried and three-year-old Lieschen, while beside her Catharina Dorothea held the youngest baby in her arms.

But when the great Passion music began, the congregation hardly knew what to make of it. Few could understand this great work, full of dramatic emotion and deep devotional feeling. The people looked at each other in amazement; some even showed extreme disapproval. Years later one who had witnessed this performance wrote:

“Some high officials and well-born ladies in one of the galleries began to sing the first Choral with great devotion from their books. But as the theatrical music proceeded, they were thrown into the greatest wonderment, saying to each other, ‘What does it all mean?’ while one old lady, a widow, exclaimed, ‘God help us! ’tis surely an opera-comedy!’ ”

Bach was wounded by the lack of understanding of what he felt to be his greatest work. If he could have witnessed the reverent enthusiasm of later generations he would have felt more than repaid.

Johann Sebastian was “a truly pious man.” The deeply religious and mystical qualities of his nature found expression in all of his music. Terry calls him “one of the tenderest and most emotional of men, with a poet’s soul and a painter’s eye. A musician . . . whose workmanship was perfect, technical skill mi-

raculous. Above all . . . a large-hearted, simple-minded Christian."

In later years the great Beethoven said that Bach had not been well named. "He should be called *Meer* [ocean] and not *Bach* [brook]—for no one ever accomplished such an enormous amount of work!"



## CHAPTER XVII

### *Cantor and Kapellmeister*

ONE evening in 1726, Bach sat before his writing-table copying out the singers' parts for the next Sunday's Cantata. A single candle threw a dim light on the sheets spread before him, and he frequently stopped to rest his tired eyes.

Sebastian often rebelled at the tedious work of copying music. Even with the help of Anna Magdalena, his older sons, and his apprentices, he never seemed to reach the end of all the copying. There were not only the singers' and orchestral parts of his own compositions to be written out, but also the works

of other composers which he wished to perform. His eyes were not equal to the constant strain.

Now his thoughts were turning to Prince Leopold and the Cöthen household; for the Prince had married again, and the work that Bach was engaged on was to be dedicated to the expected heir—his Partitas for the clavier. “They are *my* first-born, too,” he chuckled; “the first of my clavier compositions to be engraved!” Unhappily, the new little baby lived only a short time; and when soon afterward his father, the Prince, followed him to the grave, Bach journeyed for the last time to Cöthen and there performed the *Trauermusik* for the funeral service.

. . . . .

“Hurry, Magdalena—the stage-coach will be here in a few minutes now!”

Anna Magdalena fluttered excitedly around the apartment. “My shawl, Dorothea—the new one with the figured border. And the hot bricks—are they ready?” She stopped to clasp little Lieschen in her arms. “*Ach, Herzen*, do not cry! We shall be gone only a few days. Dorothea, you won’t forget the baby’s gruel?”

Catharina Dorothea nodded confidently. “Surely, dear Frau Mama, you can trust me.”

“Come, now, Magdalena, you know that our

Dorothea will see to everything." Bach was hurrying his wife toward the door. "I hear the coach now. Quickly—they will not wait!"

In another moment Sebastian and Anna Magdalena were seated in the stage-coach, and with many farewell waves to the figures watching at the window above they were off with a clatter across the bridge to the highway beyond.

Duke Christian of Weissenfels had invited Bach and his wife to attend his birthday celebration on February 25th. It had been thirteen years now since Sebastian had traveled to Weissenfels with his master, Duke Wilhelm of Weimar, and there produced his first secular Cantata in honor of the Duke's birthday. Duke Christian had never forgotten the brilliant young composer whose music had so charmed him at that time. When he heard that Prince Leopold's death had released Bach from his post of honorary *Kapellmeister* at Cöthen, he invited him to come to Weissenfels and give again the same birthday Cantata that he had produced there in 1716.

He sent a special messenger to present the invitation to Sebastian. "Duke Christian would be glad to have Frau Bach take part in the Cantata if she is so disposed!" the man said, bowing.

Anna Magdalena flushed with pleasure. It had been some time now since she had sung in public.

And when the messenger had gone, her delight overflowed. "Weissenfels!" she exclaimed. "That is where we first met. Do you remember, Sebastian?"

"As if I should be likely to forget!" her husband replied with a twinkle.

"And I was so abashed at meeting the great Herr Bach that I could hardly find words with which to greet you!"

Bach pinched his young wife's cheek. "And now it is *I* who stand in awe of *you*!"

Duke Christian's birthday celebration this year was even more magnificent than on the occasion of Sebastian's former visit, and the Cantata called forth highest praise from the guests who were present.

Before Bach returned to Leipzig Duke Christian called him to an interview. "I understand that since the death of our lamented cousin in Cöthen you no longer bear the title of *Kapellmeister*?" he asked. "It is not right that such talent as yours should go unrewarded, and we therefore appoint you honorary *Kapellmeister* to our own court here in Weissenfels."

. . . . .

During these years at Leipzig, Bach was forever trying to raise the standard of the Thomasschule choirs. But it was a difficult task: those who presented themselves for admission to the school did not always have good voices; then again, some of his best

singers would desert him, as soon as they were well trained, for the easier and more remunerative work of the Leipzig opera.

Bach, as Cantor, was supposed to examine the candidates who applied for entrance to the school, and recommend those who seemed best fitted musically. Since the main object of the Thomasschule was to furnish singers, it was natural to suppose that a good voice would be the most important condition for admittance; but the Consistorium often disregarded Bach's recommendations and admitted students with little or no musical ability.

Nor was this the worst of Bach's troubles. On his appointment to the office of Cantor, the Consistorium tried to deprive him of certain privileges and compensations that had always belonged to the position. Bach set himself to fight for his rights, and refused to give up until he had received at least a fair measure of redress. But it was a long struggle, and he was often disheartened.

At the same time he found his duties as instructor increasingly irksome. He could teach music all day; but Latin and other subjects—that was a very different matter. Besides, he needed more time for composing. Finally he paid a substitute to teach in his place at the Thomasschule.

While Bach was busy composing masterpieces the



Council, annoyed by his independence and proud spirit, met to discuss his conduct.

"Would you believe it, Magdalena?" Sebastian said indignantly to his wife. "The Council have declared me 'incorrigible'; they have even resolved to impound my salary. Listen to this report: 'Herr Bach, Cantor of the Thomasschule . . . does nothing, refuses to explain his conduct, and neglects his singing lessons, not to mention other instances of his unsatisfactoriness.' "

Anna Magdalena was aghast. "It is shameful, my Sebastian! They should be made to realize. . . ."

Bach shrugged his shoulders. "What is the use! They have no right, though, to say that I neglect the singing lessons." A spark flashed in his eye. "The worshipful Council have no conception of what church music should really be. I will make out a report." But when he did so, the report was ignored by the Council.

Bach was cut to the quick by the attitude of those above him. He seldom spoke of his feelings; though he was hot-tempered, few people were aware of the fact because of his unusual self-control. But he was deeply sensitive, and he began to think of leaving the Thomasschule for another position where his talents would receive adequate recognition.

Unexpectedly, however, one event was to bring

about great changes in the Thomasschule. During Bach's early years there, conditions had been very bad. The students were crowded together in narrow, poorly ventilated dormitories; the Cantor's quarters were too small, and the sanitary conditions throughout the building were deplorable. Among the students, discipline was wretched. Rector Ernesti, head of the school, was already very old when Bach came to the school—too old to keep order properly or to make the needed changes; and as time went on he became more and more lax in his management of school affairs. When, late in 1729, Ernesti died, Bach mourned him sincerely—their personal relations had always been cordial; but he hoped that under a new Rector conditions might be improved.

To Bach's joy and surprise, an old friend of his, Johann Matthias Gesner, was nominated to the post. Through all the long years since they had known each other in Weimar, Gesner had kept in touch with Bach; and now that he was made Rector of the Thomasschule he was happy to renew the friendship.

But he was appalled by the situation at the school. "The place is not fit to live in!" he told Sebastian.

They were sitting in the narrow front room of Bach's apartment, shortly after Gesner's installation. Anna Magdalena sat rocking little Regine, who like so many of her babies had never been really strong

or well. The last child, born that January, had lived only four days.

Bach sighed. "I hope you will be able to do something about conditions here. We have lost four little ones since we came to the Thomasschule—largely, I believe, because the place is so unhealthful."

Gesner was more successful in dealing with the Council than Bach had been. He inaugurated a complete revolution at the Thomasschule, drafted a new set of rules, and improved the discipline. He took Bach's part in the controversies with the Council, and finally was able to persuade those worshipful gentlemen to renovate and enlarge the school.

The following spring the entire staff of pupils and teachers was moved to temporary quarters while the roof of the Thomasschule was removed and two new stories were added. At the same time the rooms were enlarged and the sanitary conditions greatly improved.

It took a year to make these changes. In June, 1732, the enlarged building was completed and Bach and his family returned to their apartment just in time for the birth of Johann Christian Friedrich, one of the few children of Bach's second marriage who survived infancy.

Two months later Christiane Dorothea died; and

she was soon followed by Regine Johanna. Of eight children born during the early years at the school of St. Thomas only two survived.

. . . . .

Bach sat at the head of the supper-table surrounded by his children. Little Lieschen, his favorite, was on one side of her father, Friedemann on the other, and Anna Magdalena at the farther end with the youngest baby on her lap. The others made a wide circle round their father, who seemed like some patriarch of old in the midst of his large family.

Friedemann, the eldest son, did not hesitate to air his views.

"I think," he said importantly, "that coffee is dangerous. Father oughtn't to drink so much of it."

Anna Magdalena leaned across the table and gave her stepson a reproving tap. "Thy father knows best," she murmured.

"If coffee were really dangerous," Philipp Emanuel put in, "there would be a lot of sick people in Leipzig!"

Catharina Dorothea, who was feeding the next to youngest child, burst into a laugh. "Judging from the number of coffee-houses, *Brüderchen*, you are right!"

"No fewer than eight in Leipzig now—and

heavy taxes they must pay to the city, too," said Bernhard.

"No—but really," Friedemann protested, "I've heard that once you get the habit of drinking this new beverage you cannot do without it. Father goes to Herr Zimmerman's coffee-house several times a week, I'm sure."

"You know very well that I do that only because I have to rehearse my *Collegium Musicum* there!" his father exclaimed. "All this talk about the harmfulness of coffee is nonsense. It is a cheering and palatable dish." He began to laugh. "You should hear the satire that one of our poets recently composed on the subject." He searched through his pockets. "I made a copy of it—if I have not lost it. Oh—here it is. I'll read it to you:

"By royal mandate of the King:

"We have long noticed and with sorrow that many a one has been ruined simply by coffee. In order to stop this evil in time, we command that no one shall dare to drink coffee—the King and his court excepted. But permission may be obtained etc.

"‘Ah!’ cried the women-folk, ‘take our bread from us, for without coffee our life is dead. . . .’

"But all this broke not the King's determination—but the people died like flies. As in time of pestilence they were thrown in heaps into the graves, and the women-folk took

on dreadfully until the mandate was torn down and destroyed, when the deaths ceased. . . .”

Sebastian read the satire through with such comic and pompous seriousness that all the children were in gales of laughter. When he had finished reading, he folded the paper and looked with great seriousness at a crack in the ceiling.

“I think I shall have to compose a Cantata on coffee-drinking,” he said finally. “My cousin Nikolous once wrote a composition in praise of beer and wine, and others of my esteemed colleagues have extolled ‘The Night Watchman in Love,’ ‘The Tooth-puller,’ and even ‘The Woman who makes Cakes to cure the Worms in Leipzig.’ So why should I not sing the praises of coffee?”

Bach was true to his word. He wrote a Coffee Cantata that became famous all through the country. In it he set to music the story of Father Schlendrian whose daughter Lieschen has a passion for coffee. The father tries to cure his daughter of this weakness, but she finally gets the best of him by declaring that she will never marry unless “her lover will promise to her in person—and insert it in the marriage settlements—that she will be allowed to make coffee as she pleases.”

Bach’s own Lieschen was the only one of his daughters who married. It is not recorded whether

she, like the Lieschen of her father's famous Cantata, also had a passion for coffee. . . .

. . . . .

Bach never failed in his tender love for Anna Magdalena. Whenever he could spare a little time from his arduous duties, and she was able to leave her housework for a few moments, he would write down some small musical composition in her *Clavier-Büchlein* or "little book for the clavier"—a small green volume with corners of brown leather, and inscribed:

Clavier-Büchlein

VOR

ANNA-MAGDALENA-BACHIN

Anno 1722

Sebastian had started this book soon after their marriage, and from its pages Anna Magdalena received her first lessons on the clavier.

Later Bach started a second and larger book for his wife's use, whose cover bore only the initials and date:

A. M. B.

1725

In this he wrote down a number of songs, including the marriage poem which he had composed on their wedding day.

Bach's life and habits were of the simplest. "Let

contented." His daily existence was quiet and held little variety, yet he knew how to enjoy the small luxuries of life. Tobacco was one of his favorites, and he composed a song entitled, "Edifying Reflections of a Smoker":

Whenever in an hour of leisure,  
With *Knaster* good my pipe I fill,  
And sit and smoke for rest or pleasure,  
Sad pictures rise without my will.  
Watching the clouds of smoke float by,  
I think how like this pipe am I.

This song was originally written for bass voice, but Anna Magdalena begged her husband to transpose it for her use and to copy it in her little book. It always amused Bach to hear his wife's sweet, high voice declare: "Whenever in an hour of leisure . . . my pipe I fill, and sit and smoke. . . ."

Bach's first engraved compositions for the clavier proved such a success that he was encouraged to print another each succeeding year. Nothing like these had been known before. Forkel wrote: "Such compositions for the clavier had not been seen or heard before, and anyone who could play them was sure of a success."

In 1731 Bach gathered together the various "Partitas" (that is, clavier compositions written in several parts or movements) and published them in



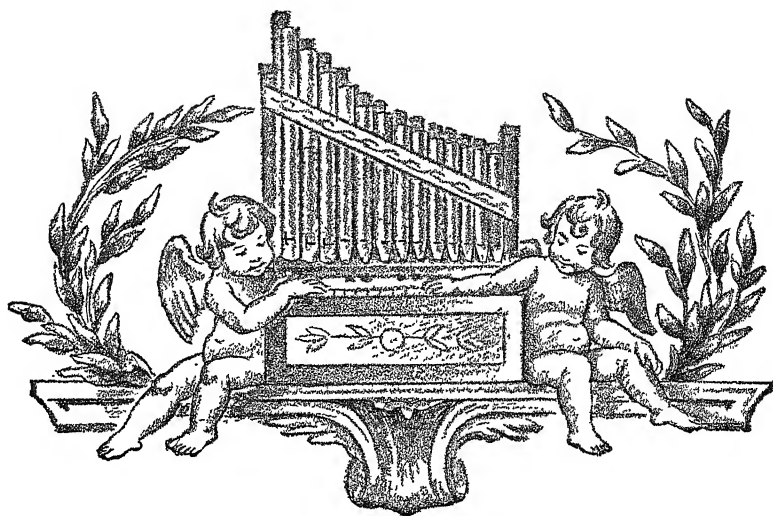
one volume. Philipp Emanuel helped his father to correct the proofs. He was now a big boy of seventeen, who had already shown marked talent in composition, and had written several short pieces of which his father was justly proud.

"Father!" he exclaimed one day as he was going over the pages of Bach's proofs. "I should like to engrave one of *my* compositions!"

Bach smiled at him with affectionate indulgence. "That is rather ambitious for a youth of seventeen!" he remarked.

Philipp Emanuel looked crestfallen. "If only I had a piece of copper, I could engrave it myself."

The result of this suggestion was that Bach, glad to encourage the boy, bought him a plate of copper, and on it Philipp Emanuel engraved his first composition—a minuet. In this way the father's "Opus 1," and the son's, both appeared in the same year. Philipp Emanuel's minuet was an immediate success. In later years he became one of the leading composers of his day, and during the last half of the 18th century was considered by many as even greater than his father—whose compositions, indeed, were for many years after his death known to comparatively few, even among musicians, being eclipsed by those of Philipp Emanuel, Johann Christian, and Wilhelm Friedemann, his eminent sons.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### *Controversies*

**T**HE King is dead. Long live the King!"

This was in 1733, and the news traveled like wildfire through the streets of Leipzig, eventually reaching the Thomas-schule and threatening to disrupt the morning lessons. Herr Gesner stopped Sebastian on his way to dinner. "Well, old Augustus is gone at last, and now his son will be King of Saxony."

Bach nodded. "The new King is a great patron

of the arts, I understand. They say he is especially well-disposed towards music. . . .”

“I know what you are thinking, my friend: ‘Here is an opportunity!’ You are right; your talents deserve greater recognition than the narrow-minded Consistorium is likely to accord them.”

The Rector spoke with feeling. He himself had hoped, when he took the position at the Thomasschule, that he would be given a chair at the University of Leipzig; but the Council would not allow it.

“Why not write a composition for the new King’s coronation,” Gesner continued, “and send it to His Majesty with a petition for admission to his *Kapelle*?”

Bach thought little of himself, but he honored music above all things, and he knew the value of his own powers. He decided to bring his compositions before the new sovereign’s notice.

“Perhaps the new King will appoint you Hof-Composer,” his wife exclaimed hopefully as Sebastian arrived at home.

“His Majesty must first become aware of my existence!” Sebastian answered with a smile. “There will be a long period of mourning for old Augustus. That will give me time to compose something really worthy.”

Bach gave careful consideration to the question of what this new composition should be. He wanted

to write something so unusual and superior that the King would be struck immediately by his power as a composer and invite him to become attached to the royal court.

The outcome was the monumental Mass in B Minor, regarded by many in the century and a half since then as the greatest musical work ever composed. The idea had long been in Bach's mind—this of composing a complete Mass embracing all the parts of the communion service in the Lutheran Church—and certain of its parts were already written, having been prepared some time before for special services. These he now gathered and expanded, adding other parts until the whole was completed. It is so long that it is never used, actually, as a church service but is played and sung only in concert halls.

For this majestic work Bach wrote a dedication, which was at the same time a petition to the new ruler, and he and his family waited eagerly for the King's reply. But no word came, for Augustus III was then engaged in a war with Poland, and he had no time to bother with the petition of a humble choir-leader in Leipzig.

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Meanwhile Bach learned from Dresden friends that a new organist was needed for the Sophienkirche there.

"I believe, Friedemann," he said to his eldest son, "I have found the right position for you at last."

Friedemann looked up from his book and stretched himself lazily. "Are you quite sure, Father? You know you said there was no use considering a post unless it was an especially good one."

Bach answered sharply: "Yes—and as a result you have been cooling your heels about the town here for five years when you should have been working. Why, at your age I had been organist for seven years."

"Well, it's not *my* fault," Friedemann rejoined sulkily. "You insisted that I must wait."

Bach's momentary impatience was gone. "You are right, my son. It is true that I have had ambitions for you. But now a really fine opportunity is in view. The post at the Sophienkirche in Dresden is vacant."

Friedemann looked up with sudden interest. "In Dresden!" He frowned. "But there will be many applicants. What chance shall I have? You know I can't write music like—like you, or Philipp Emanuel."

Bach considered for a moment. "Yes, but in other ways you are well fitted, and there is no reason why I should not give you some special training in composition between now and the date of the *Probe*, so that you may acquit yourself well."

Not long afterwards, therefore, Friedemann

traveled with his father to Dresden and took his place among the applicants for the Sophienkirche. He went through his *Probe* brilliantly, and this—with his unusually fine *Probestück*—won him the coveted position. On July 11th the organ keys were handed over to him, and he entered on his duties on August 1st, 1733.

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Disappointed by the new King's indifference to the Mass in B Minor, Bach now sought to bring himself again to the notice of the Saxon royal family, composing first a drama-cantata in honor of the King's birthday; then another for his heir, Prince Friedrich Christian; and a third for the Queen. When Augustus ended his Polish campaign successfully, Bach wrote an elaborate composition to celebrate the event. But to none of these was the royal recognition granted.

In 1734 Augustus was crowned King of Poland, and a few months later returned to Saxony. Early in October he and his Queen visited Leipzig. The city Council prepared a gala celebration for this visit; and Bach planned an ambitious program of music and began to rehearse his *Collegium Musicum*.

"Six hundred of the University students are to take part," Bernhard told his family. "At noon they will fire off all the cannon, and for the illumination at night every student is to carry a torch. The whole

affair, they say, is to cost close to three hundred thalers!"

His father smiled a little grimly. "That will be chiefly for the illumination, I do not doubt. For the musicians and myself the worshipful Council has allowed just *fifty* thalers—though we are going to furnish the chief entertainment!"

"When their Majesties hear the Cantata you have prepared they will be sure to show you some special mark of favor," Anna Magdalena said comfortingly.

Bach shook his head, though he could not help hoping that now at last his sovereigns would show some appreciation of all his efforts.

The entertainment proved to be a great success, and their Royal Highnesses appeared well pleased with the loyal homage of their subjects. But Johann Sebastian Bach remained in the background—still unrecognized.

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When Matthias Gesner had been at the Thomas-schule for four years, he left to take a better position at the University of Göttingen. It was with real regret that Bach saw him leave; the more so because the new Rector who succeeded Gesner was to cause endless annoyance and trouble for the long-suffering Cantor. It was the new Rector's idea that far too much

importance was attached to music at the Thomasschule, and soon he and Sebastian reached the stage of open hostility. When Bach took his grievances to the Council, however, his remonstrance was ignored. Thus, as the months went by, Bach's efforts to win justice became more and more hopeless. Then a sudden piece of good fortune brought him new courage.

Since 1729 Sebastian had been honorary *Kapellmeister* to Duke Christian of Weissenfels. Now—on June 28th, 1736—the Duke died, and Bach was thus released from this allegiance. Soon afterwards, a royal messenger presented himself at the Bachs' apartment.

"Is this," he asked, "the dwelling of his Honor, the Hof-Composer to His Majesty, Augustus III of Saxony?"

Anna Magdalena looked puzzled. "There must be some mistake," she murmured. "Herr Johann Sebastian Bach lives here—but he is only Cantor at the Thomasschule."

The King's messenger bowed low. "It is for Herr Bach that I have a communication from His Majesty," he said, putting a rolled and sealed document into Anna Magdalena's hand.

After his departure she was still looking at the document when her husband came in. Sebastian saw that it was addressed to "Herr Johann Sebastian Bach,



Composer to the King's court orchestra," and he tore the seals open with eager haste and read the message aloud:

*Decret*, vor Johann Sebastian Bach, as Composer to the  
King's Court Band.

Whereas His Kingly Majesty of Poland and Serene Highness the Electoral Prince of Saxony has been graciously pleased to grant to Johann Sebastian Bach—at his humble petition presented to His Majesty, and by reason of his good skill—the *Predicate* of Composer to the Court Band; this present decree is issued under His Kingly Majesty's most gracious personal signature and Royal Seal. Prepared and given at Dresden, Nov. 19, 1736.

With this mark of the King's favor before him, Bach decided to ask his sovereign for justice in his controversy with the Rector and Council of the Thomasschule; and now at last there was action. The King ordered the Council at Leipzig to investigate Bach's charges and give them immediate satisfaction. It is not known just what reparation was accorded to Bach; but the King's intervention, and Bach's stubborn fight for his rights, showed the Council that here was a man who could not lightly be trifled with; and thenceforth Bach went about his affairs unmolested by interference from either the school board or the Council.

A year after Friedemann became organist at the Sophienkirche in Dresden, his brother Philipp Emanuel found a post at Frankfurt. Then Bach began to look around for a suitable position for his third son. Bernhard was not so steady as his older brothers. He had already given his father considerable anxiety by his dissipation and extravagances. But Bach hoped that when the boy found congenial work he would settle down and forget his wild ways.

When Sebastian heard that there was a vacant post at Mühlhausen—the city where he had begun his married life as organist of the Kirche Divi Blasii—he made application for Bernhard. The Council was well pleased to secure the son of the famous Johann Sebastian Bach as organist, and in a short time Bernhard was established there.

“No more family concerts now,” Sebastian remarked sadly. Of his first wife’s children only Catharina Dorothea remained at home. Anna Magdalena’s Gottfried was a big boy of eleven, Lieschen was nearly nine, and Christoph Friedrich was the youngest. Seven of Anna Magdalena’s little ones slept in the St. Thomas Kirchhof close by. But three more children were to come later.

“Now that the boys are no longer here you will have more room for apprentices,” Anna Magdalena remarked.

Bach clung to the old German idea of the musicians' guild. Whenever possible he took his pupils into his home and allowed them to share his daily life. At various times a number of his own family—cousins and nephews—served as his apprentices; for it was a tradition among the Bachs to help each other.

"More apprentices? Yes, but Ludwig Krebs will soon be leaving, and no one can ever take his place!"

Lieschen looked up at her father with roguish eyes. "The only crab [Krebs] in Papa's brook [Bach]," she murmured.

Bach laughed indulgently, for this was a favorite pun of his. As it happened, there had been several "crabs" in Bach's brook. Already in Weimar, years before, Ludwig Krebs' father had been a pupil of Sebastian's. Now a second generation of the family sat at Bach's feet; when the elder Krebs' sons were old enough he sent them to the Thomasschule to receive instruction from his former master.

As the years went by and Bach's fame increased, pupils from far and near crowded about him. In later life many of these apprentices became distinguished musicians. Among the most outstanding were Johann Christoph Altnikol and Johann Friedrich Agricola, who was a distant cousin of Händel and who after Bach's death helped to write the *Nekrolog*, or obituary

sketch of his master's life. When Altnikol first came to Leipzig in 1744, Lieschen was just blossoming into a beautiful girl of sixteen; and their meeting was the beginning of a romance that brought joy into Bach's last years, and helped to offset the tragic end of Bernhard's life.

Bernhard had apparently settled down to a quiet and orderly life at Mühlhausen. But at the end of a year—in 1736—he wrote home to say that he had a chance to take a better position at the Marktkirche in Sangerhausen if his father would recommend him for the vacancy. Bach did not suspect Bernhard's real reason for wanting to leave Mühlhausen, and therefore—since Herr Klemm of the Sangerhausen Council was a friend of his—he wrote to ask that Bernhard's application be considered favorably.

Before Bernhard left Mühlhausen, however, his father discovered the true state of affairs: the boy had gotten into bad company and had contracted so many debts that he was practically being driven from the city! Sebastian was very much troubled by this news. He paid his son's debts and begged him to reform his ways. Bernhard promised to behave himself better in Sangerhausen; but in hardly more than a year he was in worse condition than he had been in Mühlhausen.

A letter from Herr Klemm reached Bach just as

he was leaving for a short visit to Dresden. Anna Magdalena heard her husband utter a cry, and rushed in to find Sebastian staring stupidly at the open letter in his hand. He raised haggard eyes as his wife came in. "Bernhard—" he cried. "He has disgraced us again!"

"More debts?" his wife faltered.

"Worse than that," Sebastian groaned. "A long record of dissolute behavior in Sangerhausen, and now—the boy has gone off secretly, leaving debts behind, and nobody knows where he is!"

Bach was beside himself with grief and shame. He paced the floor trying to decide what he should do. Anna Magdalena longed to comfort her husband. "We will find Bernhard," she said, "and when he sees our grief he will repent and mend his ways."

Sebastian groaned. "To think that a son of mine could do such a thing! Never in all our family history has anything like this happened. Always the Bachs have stood for honor and integrity."

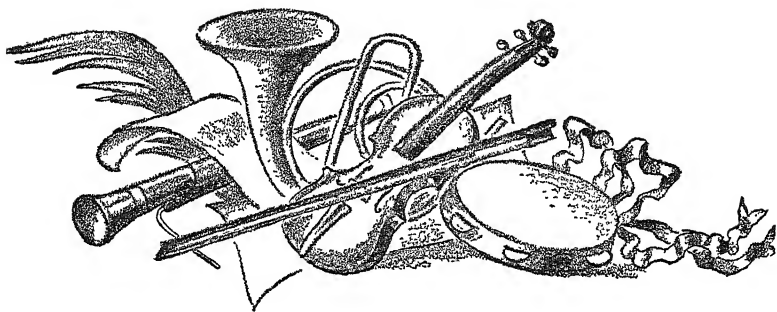
"You must write to Herr Klemm," his wife told him, "and beg him not to make the matter public yet. If we could only find out where Bernhard has gone, it might still be possible to straighten everything out."

The letter that Bach accordingly sent to his friend in Sangerhausen was an eloquent plea on behalf

of his son, admitting that the boy had been wayward and untrustworthy, but begging Herr Klemm not to be in a hurry to consider the position vacant but to wait patiently for a while until the Bachs could find the truant. Bach promised to pay the debts that the boy had left behind him in Sangerhausen, as soon as he could ascertain just what the situation was, and closed by asking Herr Klemm's help in tracing Bernhard.

In spite of everybody's efforts, however, it was not for many months that the boy was found, and during this time the elder Bach aged pitifully. The remarkable vitality that had carried him through so many other hardships seemed to have been crushed by his son's behavior. He would not allow anybody to mention Bernhard's name in his presence. "My son is dead," he told the others, his eyes somber.

It was a prophecy; for only a short time after Bernhard's whereabouts were learned—he had gone to Jena—he died there of a fever on May 27th, 1739, aged twenty-four years.



## CHAPTER XIX

### *Triumphs—and Tragedy*

IN 1738 Johann Elias Bach, a younger cousin of Sebastian's and grandson of his father Ambrosius' elder brother, came to study theology at the University of Leipzig, and Bach invited him to live in his family.

"My three younger sons need special tutoring," he told his cousin. "If you will stay with us and teach them during your spare hours I will give you instruction in music."

Anna Magdalena was in poor health. The long years of childbearing, and the loss of so many of her little ones, had worn down her fresh young beauty and exhausted her vitality. But she still had a delicate charm that endeared her to Elias. "*Frau Muhme*" he called her, and he was always seeking ways to cheer

her lagging spirits and bring a smile to her tired face.

"This week we are to have something extra good in the way of music," Elias wrote to his brother in July, 1739. And indeed there was a great stir of excitement in the Cantor's apartment at the Thomas-schule. "*Frau Muhme*" forgot her failing health in elaborate preparations, for Friedemann, who had been organist during the last six years at the Sophienkirche, was coming home. It was not often possible for Bach's eldest son to leave his post, and a visit from him was always the occasion for much rejoicing. This time there was to be a special celebration, for Friedemann had promised to bring with him two of his friends who were renowned players of the lute.

This prospect delighted Bach, for the lute was an instrument with which he was not very familiar, and he wanted to study and understand it better. The music of Friedemann's two friends proved indeed "something extra good." Bach was so pleased by their playing, and especially by the clear, sweet tones on the metal-stringed instruments, that he wrote several compositions for the lute, and was even inspired to invent a new instrument—a combination of lute and harpsichord which he called a *Lautenclavicembalo*, a forerunner of our modern piano.

During this period a man named Gottfried Sil-



bermann, of a famous family of Saxony, was at work on a new kind of clavier. Several years before this, Cristofori, a Florentine, had conceived the idea of using hammers to strike tones from a wire string; and Silbermann adapted this invention to the old-time clavier. When Bach heard of Silbermann's instrument he was so much interested that he went to examine it.

"It has wonderful possibilities," he told Silbermann after inspecting its construction and listening critically to its tone. "But there is room for improvement, I think. The touch is too heavy, for one thing, and the tone of the upper notes is feeble."

Silbermann profited by Bach's criticisms, working for years to improve the tone and the action of his clavier. More than a century was to pass, however, before the piano as we know it today finally evolved from Silbermann's first creation.

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In 1741 Philipp Emanuel was called to Berlin to serve as accompanist to Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, and a few years later married the daughter of a Berlin wine-merchant. When Bach's first grandchild was born, there was great rejoicing in the Cantor's apartment.

"A grandson—what do you think of that, Magdalena!" Sebastian exclaimed proudly.

Anna Magdalena knew her husband. "I think," she replied, "that you will not be content now until you see that baby. You will have to go to Berlin!"

Bach chuckled. "Did you guess that Philipp Emanuel's letter contains two invitations? He says that his illustrious master has expressed a desire to meet your honorable husband. So it appears that you are right: I *shall* have to go to Berlin."

Frederick of Prussia was one of the greatest kings Germany has ever known, a remarkable soldier and statesman and equally distinguished in the arts. He was an accomplished musician and played the flute like a professional. Bach's music was well known to him, and he had often told young Philipp Emanuel that his celebrated father would be welcome at court.

In 1747, therefore, Bach—now sixty-two years old—journeyed to Berlin to see his new daughter-in-law and grandchild, and to be presented to Frederick.

The royal palace at Potsdam, just outside of Berlin, was a blaze of candlelight one evening in early May, 1747. Frederick's palace was one of the most luxurious in Europe. From his various campaigns the King had brought back many trophies, and his devotion to the arts led him to add continually to his large collection of treasures. The spacious rooms were filled with magnificent paintings, tapestries, and sculptures, suggesting a vast museum.

In the great gallery, Frederick and his musicians prepared for the evening concert, for every evening from 7 to 9 there was music. The King played his flute and chose the music for the program. Tonight, just as the concert was about to begin, the King's accompanist brought his master a list of the guests who had that day arrived in Potsdam. Frederick looked at it and gave a cry of delight. "Gentlemen," he called to his orchestra, "old Bach is come!"

There was a stir of interest among the musicians, and the King drew Philipp Emanuel aside and spoke to him urgently. "Bring your father to us at once. He must join our concert!"

As Frederick's wish was law in Potsdam, Philipp Emanuel did not pause to protest that his father would hardly—after a long journey—be dressed to appear at the palace; instead, he hurried off with the summons.

Just as Frederick was completing his flute solo, a gorgeous flunky in powdered wig and satin breeches threw open the door and loudly announced "His Excellency, Hof-Composer to His Majesty, Augustus III of Saxony, and Cantor of the Leipzig Thomasschule—Herr Johann Sebastian Bach!"

And there came forward a stocky figure, with hastily adjusted wig and plain black suit much the worse for days of traveling. The lines of age and

sorrow in the man's face made him seem older than his years, but he had such an air of power and dignity that the courtiers were hardly conscious of his dress.

Frederick was delighted to see the great musician. He escorted Bach through the drawing-rooms of the palace and made him try the new Silbermann claviers which had been recently installed.

"We should like to hear you improvise, Herr Cantor," the King said. "Your skill as a performer has been lauded so highly that our curiosity has been aroused."

Bach bowed with graceful deference. "Your Majesty's musicianship is even more renowned than my poor talents. Would your gracious Highness perhaps give me a theme to develop?"

Frederick sat down at the clavier and played a short melody. Bach then seated himself in his turn and developed from the King's meager theme a magnificent six-part fugue, to be published later as "*Das Musikalische Opfer*"—"The Musical Offering."

Frederick was enchanted. "Your skill is truly miraculous!" he cried. "And I am told that your organ-playing is even more remarkable. Tomorrow I must hear you!"

On the next day Philipp Emanuel took his father to visit the Royal Opera House in Berlin, and here again Bach amazed his witnesses. When he entered

the grand salon, which was in the shape of a parallelogram with vaulted roof, he looked around the great hall and remarked, "What a curious phenomenon the architect has produced here!"

The others gazed at him questioningly. "What do you mean, sir?"

Bach chuckled. "Go over to the other side of the hall" —he indicated the spot— "and stand with your faces to the wall."

Full of wonder, the younger Bach and his friends did as they were told. Suddenly they heard Bach whispering to them. "Do you hear me?" But the old Cantor from the Thomasschule was not beside them—not even near them. They turned and saw him standing in the opposite corner of the large hall.

He had discovered at a glance the curious acoustical qualities of the room, which no one had noticed before.

. . . . .  
"May I come in, Master?"

Bach sat at his writing table in the small study of the family apartment, at work on the second series of *The Well-tempered Clavichord*, copying the music out in clear, perfect style. During these weeks he was also engaged in composing the celebrated series of fourteen clavier fugues called *The Art of the Fugue*. Of late he had found himself obliged to stop

often and rest his eyes; sometimes everything went black and he could not see the notes before him. Now, when he looked up, he could not at first distinguish the features of the apprentice who stood at the door; but he recognized the voice of Christoph Altnikol.

"The Council at Naumburg has accepted my application for the Wenzelkirche!" the young man exclaimed with elation. "Thanks to your letter of recommendation, Master!"

Bach smiled at his apprentice. Altnikol had lived with him for four years now and had come to seem more like a son than an apprentice.

"You needed no recommendation from me, Christoph. You have been a diligent pupil; you deserve a worthy post."

Altnikol coughed nervously. "May I—may I ask a great favor, sir?" he stammered.

Bach became suddenly conscious that someone else stood in the open doorway behind Altnikol. But before he had time to think, Lieschen darted forward and climbed upon his knee.

"You *know*, Papa, what Christoph wants to ask you! And you *will* say yes, won't you, *liebster Vater*?"

Lieschen hid her blushing face on her father's

shoulder, while Altnikol, very red and embarrassed, stood waiting for Bach to speak.

Sebastian pretended great surprise and even indignation. "You would take my Lieschen from me, Herr Altnikol?"

Christoph was overcome with confusion. "I thought—we thought—it seemed natural. . . ."

"*Natural!*" Bach thundered. "Natural to rob a father of his dearest child? Natural to repay my years of kindness to you in this fashion?"

Poor Christoph hardly knew which way to turn. But when Lieschen, on his shoulder, gave a muffled sob, Bach could no longer keep up his pose, and he burst into a roar of laughter and held out his great hand to Altnikol.

"Take her, my boy! There is no one I would give her to more willingly."

After Lieschen's wedding—which was celebrated with great rejoicing—Bach watched her departure with mixed emotions. He was glad to see her married to Altnikol, but it was hard to lose the child he loved best. Also, he would have enjoyed the wedding festivities more if it had not been for the cruel pain in his head. He sat most of the evening with his hands over his eyes, and tried to forget the fear in his heart. . . .

. . . . .

During the months following Lieschen's marriage Bach worked with feverish energy at his *Kunst der Fuge* (Art of the Fugue) and on a new set of Chorales founded on old Lutheran hymn-tunes. It was almost as if he realized how few more hours were left to him. He could work for only short periods at a time now. Then the notes began to dance before his eyes in such confusion that for hours he could make no meaning of the score.

He complained that the light was insufficient in his narrow study, and moved into the corner room next door. Then the ink, he said, was too pale.

"It is rest you need, my dearest one," Anna Magdalena told him.

"There is so much yet to do, Magdalena," he would reply with sad insistence.

Then suddenly, in the summer of 1749, Bach was stricken with paralysis as he worked. He lay for days in a stupor, and Anna Magdalena was beside herself with anxiety. In time he rallied a little, and one day opened his eyes to find Lieschen bending over him.

"You are better, *liebster Vater!*" she cried joyously. "See, I knew that if I came to you from Naumburg you would recover." She leaned closer. "I have a secret to tell you . . . *another grandchild* soon, and if it is a boy he shall be named after you!"



Bach smiled weakly at his favorite daughter. "Then—I shall have to get well," he murmured.

With a remnant of his old determination Bach pulled himself together and conquered the paralysis that had attacked him. But his poor eyes were weaker than before. He could hardly see now; he had to be helped up and down the stairs—across the street—at every turn. It was almost impossible for him to work; yet with the help of his apprentices he struggled on with the "Eighteen Chorales," which were to be his last work.

. . . . .

In January, 1750, a celebrated English oculist passed through Leipzig on his way from Vienna. He examined Bach's eyes and persuaded him to submit to an operation. The mercy of anaesthesia was not to be given to mankind until a century later, and the shock of the operation on the sensitive nerves of Bach's eyes proved more than even his strong constitution could endure.

For weeks afterwards he lay in a darkened room with bandaged eyes, too weak to move. In addition to his own suffering and discouragement he was bowed down with the sorrow of his Lieschen; for her baby, little Johann Sebastian, had lived for three months only.

The long hours of enforced inaction and the

dreadful darkness that shut him off from the world depressed Bach intolerably. He was like a child. "How much longer now, Magdalena?" he would cry fretfully. "Surely today we can remove the bandages!"

Anna Magdalena tried to soothe him with un-failing tenderness. "Just a little longer, my Sebastian. . . ."

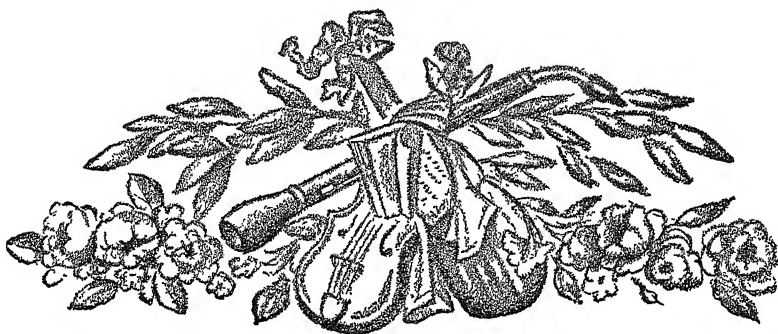
"But I *must* get back to work!"

"Only a little more patience, and you will see again. Isn't that worth waiting for?"

So he waited patiently until the bandages could come off. Finally, when the oculist gave the order, Sebastian was allowed to look at the world around him once more. Apparently the operation had been successful—he could see, and would now be able to finish the Eighteen Chorale Preludes.

He sat down to work again, but the copying of the music proved to be too much for his sight, and just as he had written out the fifteenth he found himself totally blind once more. It was a hideous blow, both to him and to his wife—especially so because they had both been feeling so relieved and glad. Anna Magdalena decided to send for Lieschen and her husband, Altnikol.

Thus June, 1750, came and went.



## CHAPTER XX

### *The Brook Flows to the Sea*

THE Thomasschule was strangely quiet, those days in July. Within the Cantor's apartment the curtains were drawn close and everyone moved with sorrowful stillness. Only the sound of the mill across the way could be heard, and the faint music of the organ being played in the Thomaskirche close by.

Bach was by now so ill, so discouraged, that he was spending most of the day in bed, struggling to get up from time to time in order to work with his son-in-law, Christoph Altnikol. For the younger man was trying to finish the taking down of the Chorale Preludes from Bach's dictation. Fifteen of these were already completed, and two more were to be set on paper before the middle of July.

Now Anna Magdalena knelt at the side of her husband's bed, unwilling to leave him for more than a few moments at a time. Lieschen held her father's emaciated hand in her own, while Christoph stood at the foot of the bed, ready to do anything the sick man asked. Yesterday the two had been working on the very last Chorale, the Eighteenth, Bach dictating the music and Altnikol writing it down; but at the twenty-sixth bar Bach had collapsed—too ill and weak to finish.

The younger man was thinking, now, of the words of this Chorale:

Before Thy throne, my God, I stand,  
Myself, my all, are in Thy hand;  
Turn to me Thine approving face,  
Nor from me now withhold Thy grace!

Grant that my end may worthy be,  
And that I wake Thy face to see,  
Thyself for evermore to know;  
Amen, Amen, God grant it so!

He reflected sadly on their appropriateness, for he realized as well as the others did that the great musician's end was near, and like them he was confident that the prayer expressed in the fine old Lutheran hymn must soon be answered.

. . . . .

On July 18th the sick man rallied slightly, though not enough to talk to any of the family—not enough, certainly, to give them any hope. And within a few hours he was stricken with apoplexy, and they knew that this must be the beginning of the end.

For ten days he lay in a high fever, delirious, not recognizing his wife or any of the other watchers in that room of death. Always Bach had had a rugged constitution, and now it was unwilling to admit defeat. But finally, at twilight on July 28th, the end came.

The mill stood silent now. There was no singing in the Thomasschule. Nobody touched the organ. For Bach—their Bach—was dead.

The deep-flowing brook had ceased to flow. But its voice was destined to sing forever—to inspire men and women for generations and centuries to come, to teach them Truth and Beauty through the understanding of great music.



## APPENDICES

RECORDINGS OF BACH'S MUSIC

THE WORLD THAT BACH LIVED IN

INDEX





## *Recordings of Bach's Music*

A complete list of Bach's compositions would require many more pages than there is room for in this book. However, the following list of recordings includes most of his important works. Certain European records, formerly imported to this country, have not for some years been available here, though with the return of normal conditions they will perhaps be stocked again. In any case, you will find it worth while to ask your local dealer about new Bach records from time to time.

### RECORD NO.

*Arioso*—see Cantatas, Church, No. 156, p.  
245

*Art of the Fugue*—see *Kunst der Fuge*, p. 252

Brandenburg Concertos—see below, Con-  
certos I

Cantatas, Church:

No. 4, *Christ lag in Todesbanden* (Easter  
Cantata, "Christ lay in death's  
dark prison")

Complete recording by Orfeó Catalá  
of Barcelona, sung in Catalanian

VM-120

No. 29, Pentecost Cantata

The *Sinfonia* of this cantata is the  
same music as the *Preludio* of the  
Unacc. Violin Sonata No. 6 in E—  
see p. 258

## Cantatas, Church (Cont.):

- No. 35, *Geist und Seele* ("Spirit and Soul")

The 2d *Sinfonia* of this, arr. for quintet. American Soc. of Ancient Instruments, Ben Stad

VM-271

- No. 68, *Also hat Gott die Welt geliebt* ("God so loved the world")

Aria, *Mein gläubiges Herz* ("My heart ever faithful")

Lotte Leonard

D-25316

E. Schumann-Heink

V-7388

- No. 78, *Jesu, der dir meine Seele*

Chorus, *Wir eilen*. Reinhardt Chorus

C-68228D

- No. 106, *Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit* ("God's time is the best time")

Sonatine (Prelude) arr. organ. C. Courboin

V-15420

- No. 123, *Liebster Immanuel* ("Dearest Immanuel")

Chorale, *Drum fahrt nur immerhin*. St. George's Chapel Choir

C-DB656

- No. 140, *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme* ("Sleepers, Awake!")

Opening Chorus, *Wachet auf*; Chorale, *Zion hört die Wächter*; Final Chorale, *Gloria sei dir gesungen*. Orfeo Catalá, Barcelona

VM-120

Chorale, "Now let every tongue adore Thee," D. Maynor, Philadelphia Orch., Ormandy

V-18166

- No. 147, *Herz und Mund* ("Heart and Mouth")

## RECORD NO.

## Cantatas, Church (Cont.):

*Jesu bleibet meine Freude.* This is  
*Jesus, Joy of Man's Desiring*—see  
 under Chorales, p. 247

- No. 156, *Ich steh' mit einem Fuss im Grabe*  
 ("I stand with one foot in the  
 grave")

*Sinfonia* (the "*Arioso*")

NBC Symphony Orch., Stokowski

V-18498

All-American Orch., Stokowski

CM-541

Virgil Fox, organ

V-11-8236

Bach Cantata Club String Orch. (Leon  
 Goossens, oboe)

CM-232

(See also slow mvt. of the Clavier  
 Concerto No. 5 in F minor, p. 249)

- No. 158, *Der Friede sei mit dir* ("Peace be  
 with you")

McClosky, with strings, hpsd., and  
 organ directed by E. V. Wolff

CM-X191

- No. 159, *Sehet, wir geh'n hinauf*

Aria, *Es ist vollbracht* (not to be con-  
 fused with the aria of the same title  
 in the St. John Passion)

E. Schumann, L. Goossens, K. Alwin

V-7275

## Cantatas, Secular:

- No. 201, *Der Streit zwischen*

*Patron, Patron*

Lily Pons (in French), and Renais-  
 sance Quartet

V-2152

- No. 202, Wedding Cantata

Complete recording. E. Schumann,  
 Y. Pessl, and instr. ensemble

VM-664

RECORD NO.

## Cantatas, Secular (Cont.):

No. 208, *Was mir behagt* (Birthday Cantata  
for the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels)

Aria, *Sheep may safely graze*

Katherine Harris (sop.) with record-  
ers, gamba, hpsd.

Hargail  
MW-104

Arr. for 2 pianos. Bartlett and  
Robertson

C-69818D

Arr. for orch. N. Y. Philharmonic-  
Symphony, Barbirolli

C-11575D

No. 211, Coffee Cantata

Ethyl Hayden (sop.), Wm. Hain  
(ten.), B. De Loache (bar.), with  
instr. ensemble directed by E. V.  
Wolff

MC-5

No. 212, Peasant Cantata

Abridged version sung in French.  
Guyla, Singher, chamber orch.

VM-360

Capriccio on the Departure of a Beloved  
Brother

Karl Ulrich Schnabel, piano

V-4293/4

Chaconne—see Sonata, Unacc. Violin No. 4,  
pp. 257-58

## Chorale-Preludes:

Four Chorale-Preludes arr. for piano by  
Busoni (I call to Thee; Sleepers,  
awake; In Thee is joy; Rejoice,  
Christians)

Egon Petri

C-71463D

Chorale-Preludes (Cont.):

- Arr. for orch. by Stokowski (Out of the  
deep I call; We all believe in one  
God; I cry to Thee, etc.) VM-59  
VM-401
- Album of 12 Chorale-Preludes, organ.  
A. Schweitzer CM-310
- Album of 9 Chorale-Preludes, organ.  
C. Weinrich MC-22
- Three albums of 35 Chorale-Preludes,  
organ. E. Power Biggs VM-616  
VM-652  
VM-697

Chorales:

- Christi Mutter stand in Schmerzen*  
Lotte Lehmann and organ D-20336
- Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*  
Staats und Domchor and orch. D-25856
- Arr. orch.  
Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski V-1692  
All-American Orch., Stokowski CM-X219
- Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*  
Temple Church Chorus, with Goos-  
sens V-4286
- Arr. orch. Philadelphia Orch., Or-  
mandy V-14973
- Arr. piano. Myra Hess V-4538
- Arr. 2 pianos. Bartlett and Robertson C-17240D
- Organ. E. Power Biggs V-18292
- Komm, süßer Tod* (Come, sweet death)  
Arr. orch.  
Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski VM-243  
All-American Orch., Stokowski CX-220

## RECORD NO.

## Chorales (Cont.):

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| Virgil Fox, organ   | V-18495 |
| Pablo Casals, 'cello  | V-7501  |
| <i>O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden</i> (from St.<br>Matthew Passion) |         |
| L. Lehmann and organ  | D-20336 |

Christmas Oratorio—*see below*, Oratorio

## Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue in D minor

- |                          |          |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Edwin Fischer, piano     | V-8680/1 |
| Wanda Landowska, hpsd.   | VM-323   |
| Ralph Kirkpatrick, hpsd. | MC-25    |

## Concertos:

## I. Brandenburg Concertos

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| All six. Busch Chamber Players                                  | CM-249/50         |
| No. 4 in G major. String ensemble,<br>recorders, hpsd., Rachlin | Hargail<br>MW-105 |
| No. 5 in D major. Paris Ecole Nor-<br>male Orch., with Cortot   | V-7863/4          |

## II. Clavier Concertos

## (1) Unaccompanied—

## Italian Concerto in F major

- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| A. Schnabel, piano       | VM-806                    |
| Wanda Landowska, hpsd.   | V-14232/3                 |
| Ralph Kirkpatrick, hpsd. | MC-1006/7                 |
| Edith Weiss-Mann, hpsd.  | Mary Howard<br>Recordings |

## Concerto after Vivaldi in A minor

- |                       |      |
|-----------------------|------|
| E. Power Biggs, organ | TC-1 |
|-----------------------|------|

## Concertos (Cont.):

## RECORD NO.

## (2a) Clavier with orchestra

No. 1 in D minor. E. Fischer with  
chamber orch. VM-252

No. 4 in A major. E. Fischer with  
chamber orch. VM-368

No. 5 in F minor (whose slow mvt.  
is the *Arioso*). E. Fischer with  
chamber orch. VM-786

## (2b) Two claviers with orchestra

No. 1 in C minor. Manuel and William-  
son hpsd. ensemble MC-46

No. 2 in C major. A. and K. U. Schna-  
bel with London Symphony Orch.,  
Boult VM-357

(2c) Four claviers with orchestra. Pi-  
gnari, Leroux, Rolet, Coppola, and  
orch. VM-366

## III. Violin Concertos

## No. 1 in A minor

Menuhin, Paris Symphony Orch., Enesco V-14370/1

Hubermann, Vienna Philharmonic  
Orch., Dobrowen CM-X45

## No. 2 in E major

Menuhin, Orch., Enesco VM-221

Adolf Busch and Busch Chamber  
Players CM-530

## For two violins in D minor

Busch and Magnes, Busch Chamber  
Players CM-X253

Menuhin and Enesco, Paris Sym-  
phony Orch., Monteux VM-932

Szigeti and Flesch, hpsd. and orch. CM-X90

## Concertos (Cont.):

- IV. Triple Concerto (clavier, flute, violin)  
 Pessl, Blaisdell, Kroll, and string orch. VM-534

English Suites—*see* Suites, p. 261

## Fantasias:

- Fantasia in G minor. Yella Pessl, hpsd. CM-X70  
 Fantasia in C minor (Peters IX, 7)  
     J. Iturbi, piano V-18126  
     H. Cumpson, piano C-68193D  
*Adagio* & C-major Fantasia  
     A. Fiedler's Sinfonietta V-13809  
     (The *Adagio* is the *Andante* from the  
     Unacc. Violin Sonata No. 3 in A  
     minor. The Fantasia is from an  
     unfinished organ work.)

## Fantasias &amp; Fugues for organ:

- Fantasia & Fugue in C minor  
     E. Commette C-70087D  
 Fantasia & ("Great") Fugue in G minor  
     A. Schweitzer CM-270  
     Arr. orch. Minneapolis Symphony  
     Orch., Mitropoulos CX-244  
     (For recording of the "Great"  
     G-minor Fugue alone, *see* below  
     under Fugues)

French Suites—*see* Suites, p. 261

## Fugues:

- "Great" Organ Fugue in G minor  
     Arr. orch. Philadelphia Orch., Sto-  
     kowski V-1728



RECORD NO.

Fugues (Cont.):

"Little" Organ Fugue in G minor

A. Schweitzer

CM-270

Arr. orch. All-American Orch., Sto-  
kowski

CM-451

Arr. piano. O. Samaroff

V-7384

Organ Fugue à la Gigue in G major (Peters  
I, v, 3)

R. Goss-Custard

V-4086

Arr. orch. Boston "Pops" Orch.,  
Fiedler

V-10-1070

Organ Fugue in E-flat (*St. Ann*)

J. Bonnet

V-11-8258

E. Power Biggs

Technichord  
Album No. 1

Arr. orch. Chicago Symphony Orch.,  
Stock

VM-958

Fugue in C minor (Peters VII, 2)

Landowska, hpsd.

V-14233

Fugue in G minor (Peters VII, 3)

S. Frenkel (violin), E. V. Wolff (hpsd.)

MC-1029

Fugue in C major (Peters IX, 8)

Pessl, hpsd.

C-68746

Fugue in A minor (Peters XV)

E. V. Wolff, hpsd.

C-69465D

Goldberg Variations for harpsichord

Wanda Landowska

Goldberg  
Variations  
Soc. Album

Inventions

No. 1 in F major

R. Tureck, piano

V-11923

## RECORD NO.

## Inventions (Cont.)

Fifteen two-part Inventions (with Little  
Prelude No. 5 in E major)

E. Balogh, piano

Asch  
Album  
DM 102

Italian Concerto—see Concertos II, 1

*Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*—see under Cho-  
rales, p. 247

*Komm, süsßer Tod*—see under Songs, p.  
260

*Kunst der Fuge* (Art of the Fugue)

E. Power Biggs, organ

Arr. string quartet. Roth Quartet

VM-832/33  
CM-206

## Mass in B minor

Complete recording. Elisabeth Schu-  
mann, Margaret Balfour, Walter  
Widdop, Friedrich Schorr, Royal  
Choral Society, London Symphony  
Orch., Coates

VM-104

## Menuets:

In G major, G minor, G major (Peters  
XIII, 11)

E. Petri, piano

Arr. violin and piano. Kreisler

C-69153D  
V-1136

Motet, *Singet dem Herrn*

Westminster Choir

V-14613

RECORD NO.

*Das Musikalische Opfer* (The Musical Offering)

Adapted for instr. ensemble, directed  
by Y. Pessl

VM-709

No. 2 Ricercare

Boyd Neel Orch.

D-K903

String orch., Fischer

V-8660

Oratorio, Christmas

Shepherds' Christmas Music

Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski

V-7142

Arr. piano. Bachaus

V-8736

Orchestra: Collections of Transcriptions by  
Stokowski:

Trio Sonata No. 1 in E-flat (1st mvt.);  
Chorale-Prelude, *Ich ruf' zu dir,*  
*Herr Jesus Christ*; Organ Prelude  
& Fugue in E minor; *Es ist voll-*  
*bracht* (St. John Passion)

Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski

VM-963

Chaconne; Chorale-Prelude, *Nun komm'*  
*der Heiden Heiland*; Adagio (from  
Organ Toccata, Adagio, & Fugue in  
C); Siciliano (from Clavier and  
Violin Sonata No. 4); Song, *Komm',*  
*süsser Tod*; Sarabande (English  
Suite No. 3)

Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski

VM-243

Organ Passacaglia & Fugue in C minor;  
*My Soul Is Athirst* (St. Matthew  
Passion); *My Jesus in Gethsemane;*  
*Christ Lay in Death's Dark Prison*  
and *Jesus Christ, the Son of God*

## RECORD NO.

(Church Cantata No. 4); Sarabande  
(Unacc. Violin Sonata No. 2 in B  
minor); Air (Orch. Suite No. 3 in  
D major)

Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski

VM-401

Arioso; Prelude in E-flat minor (*Well-  
Tempered Clavier*); Andante (Un-  
acc. Violin Sonata in A minor)

All-American Orch., Stokowski

CM-541

## Organ:

Collections by Albert Schweitzer:

I. Fantasia & ("Great") Fugue in G  
minor; "Little" Fugue in G minor;  
Preludes & Fugues in C major,  
F minor, G major; Toccata &  
Fugue in D minor

CM-270

II. Thirteen Chorale-Preludes

CM-310

III. Preludes & Fugues in C minor,  
C major, and E minor; Fugue in A  
minor

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rale-Preludes; Passacaglia in C  
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Musicraft

*Das Orgelbüchlein*, E. Power Biggs, 3 vols.

10, 22, 36, 37

VM-652

697, 711

(For Organ Fugues *see above*, Fugues)

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- |                                |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| No. 1, B-flat major            |           |
| W. Landowska, hpsd.            | V-14146/7 |
| H. Samuel, piano               | V-11483/4 |
| W. Giesecking, piano           | C-68399D  |
| No. 2, C minor                 |           |
| H. Samuel, piano               | CM-X5     |
| No. 4, D major                 |           |
| Rachmaninoff, piano (6th mvt.) | V-6621    |
| No. 5, G major                 |           |
| Giesecking, piano              | CM-X208   |
| No. 6, E minor                 |           |
| Giesecking, piano              | CM-X135   |

Partitas, Violin—*see* Sonatas, Unacc. Violin,  
Nos. 2, 4, 6, pp. 257-58

Passacaglia & Fugue in C minor for organ

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| C. Weinrich                                    | MC-10   |
| Arr. quartet. Stradivarius String Quar-<br>tet | CM-X72  |
| Arr. orchestra                                 |         |
| Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski                  | VM-401  |
| All-American Orch., Stokowski                  | CM-X216 |

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- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| Five excerpts. Brussels Royal Con-<br>servatory Chorus, Orch., Organ,<br>Defauw | C-D15015/6 |
| Five excerpts. St. William's Chorus,<br>Organ                                   | D-25358    |
| No. 58, Alto Solo, <i>Es ist vollbracht</i><br>M. Anderson                      | V-18326    |

## RECORD NO.

## Passion Music (Cont.):

- Arr. orch. Philadelphia Orch.,  
Stokowski V-8764
- No. 67, Chorus, *Ruht wohl*. Berlin  
College Chorus and Orch., Stein V-12331
- St. Matthew Passion  
Complete recording. Soloists, Har-  
vard Glee Club, Radcliffe Choral  
Society, E. V. Wolff (hpsd.), Carl  
Weinrich (organ), Boston Sym-  
phony Orch., Koussevitzky. Three  
vols. VM-411/13
- No. 3, *Herzliebster Jesu*, arr. orch.  
Philadelphia Orch., Ormandy V-18166
- No. 47, *Erbarme dich*. E. Szanthy,  
Orch. V-14906
- No. 58, *Aus Liebe will mein Heiland  
sterben*. E. Schumann, flute, orch. V-7275
- No. 63, Chorale, *O Haupt voll Blut und  
Wunden*. Arr. orch. Philadelphia  
Orch., Stokowski VM-401
- No. 78, Final Chorus, *Wir setzen uns*.  
Arr. organ. C. Courboin V-14321

Piano—*Note:* Bach composed nothing for the modern piano, but many of his works for clavier and harpsichord are now played and recorded by pianists. See *passim* in this list for such piano recordings.

## Preludes:

Twelve Little Preludes (from Wilhelm Friedemann Bach's *Clavier-Büchlein*)

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- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| Y. Pessl, hpsd.                               | C-17063/4D |
| W. Landowska, hpsd. (Nos. 1, 2, 3)            | V-14233    |
| Six Little Preludes                           |            |
| W. Landowska, hpsd.                           | VM-323     |
| Prelude in C minor for lute (Peters IX,<br>3) |            |
| Arr. guitar. A. Segovia                       | V-7176     |

Preludes & Fugues, Organ—*see above*, Organ  
Collections, p. 254

*Sheep May Safely Graze—see above*, Cantatas,  
Secular, No. 208, p. 246

Sonatas:

Ia. Unaccompanied Violin:

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| No. 1 in G minor                                |          |
| J. Szigeti                                      | CM-X1    |
| Y. Menuhin                                      | V-8361/2 |
| 1st mvt. (Adagio). N. Milstein                  | CM-X61   |
| 2d movt. (Fugue). Arr. guitar. A.<br>Segovia    | V-7176   |
| 4th mvt. (Bourrée)                              |          |
| Arr. harp. G. Gerard                            | D-20638  |
| Arr. orch. Victor Concert Orch.,<br>Black       | V-25639  |
| No. 2 in B minor (also called Partita<br>No. 1) |          |
| Y. Menuhin                                      | VM-487   |
| No. 3 in A minor (also called No. 2)            |          |
| J. Szigeti                                      | CM-X2    |
| No. 4 in D minor (also called Partita<br>No. 2) |          |

	RECORD NO.
Sonatas (Cont.):	
Y. Menuhin	VM-232
Johana Harris, piano	VM-506
5th mvt., the <i>Chaconne</i> . Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski	VM-243
No. 5 in C major (also called No. 3)	
Y. Menuhin	VM-284
No. 6 in E major (also called Partita No. 3)	
Y. Menuhin	VM-488
1st mvt. (Preludio) arr. orch.	
All-American Orch., Stokowski	C-11983D
Philadelphia Orch., Ormandy	V-14973
(This Preludio was also used by Bach as the Prelude to the Church Can- tata No. 29)	
Three mvts. (Preludio, Gavotte, Rondo) arr. piano. Rachmaninoff	V-11-8607
Ib. Unaccompanied 'Cello	
No. 1, G major	
P. Casals	VM-742
No. 2, D minor	
P. Casals	VM-611
No. 3, C major	
P. Casals	VM-611
No. 4, E-flat major	
Ivan d'Archambeau	MC-19
No. 6, D major	
P. Casals	VM-742
II. Trio-Sonatas for 2 claviers and pedals:	
No. 1, E-flat major	
E. Power Biggs, organ	TC-1
No. 4, E minor	



RECORD NO.

Sonatas (Cont.):

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| G. Ramin, on organ of St. Thomas's,<br>Leipzig                               | D-20168/9 |
| Arr. 2 pianos. Vronsky and Babin   | VM-778    |
| No. 5, C major   |           |
| C. Weinrich, organ   | MC-6      |
| Arr. 2 pianos. Vronsky and Babin   | VM-778    |
| No. 6, G major. C. Weinrich, organ   | MC-6      |
| III. Sonatas for clavier and one instru-<br>ment:                            |           |
| (a) Clavier and flute  |           |
| No. 1, B minor. Y. Pessl (hpsd.), G.<br>Barrère (flute)                      | VM-406    |
| No. 2, E-flat major. Pessl, Barrère  | VM-406    |
| No. 4, C major. Pessl, Barrère   | VM-406    |
| No. 5, E minor. Le Roy (flute), Al-<br>bert-Levêque (hpsd.), Kirsch ('cello) | MC-16     |
| No. 6, E major. Le Roy, Albert-Le-<br>vêque, Kirsch                          | MC-16     |
| (b) Clavier and viola da gamba   |           |
| No. 1, G major. E. V. Wolff and<br>Scholz                                    | CM-X104   |
| No. 2, D major. E. V. Wolff and<br>Scholz                                    | CM-X111   |
| No. 3, G minor. E. V. Wolff and<br>Scholz                                    | CM-X147   |
| (c) Clavier and violin   |           |
| No. 3, E major. Y. and H. Menuhin  | VM-887    |
| No. 4, C minor   |           |
| Arr. orch. Philadelphia Orch.,<br>Stokowski                                  | V-8495    |
| 1st mvt. Serkin (piano), Busch<br>(violin)                                   | C-LX438   |

## RECORD NO.

## Sonatas (Cont.):

No. 5, F minor. Maas (piano), Du-  
bois (violin)

C-LX304/6

No. 6, G major. Maas and Dubois  
Sonata in E minor for violin and  
figured bass. A. Busch (violin), A.  
Balsam (piano)

C-LFX272/3

C-71572D

IV. Six Sonatas for harpsichord and violin  
Alice Ehlers (hpsd.), B. Schwartz  
(violin)

GEN-MS11/16

## Songs:

*Bist du bei mir*

E. Schumann

V-8423

L. Lehmann

D-20334

R. Hayes

CM-393

*Komm, süßer Tod*

M. Anderson

V-1939

H. Lashanska

V-7085

Arr. orch.

Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski

VM-243

All-American Orch., Stokowski

C-11773D

Arr. 'cello. Casals

V-7501

Arr. organ. Virgil Fox

V-18495

*Liebster Herr Jesu.* Ernst Wolff

CM-457

*Mein Jesu, was für Seelenweh,* arr. orch.

Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski

VM-401

All-American Orch., Stokowski

C-19004D

*O Jesulein süß.* Ernst Wolff

CM-457

*Vergiss mein nicht.* Ernst Wolff

CM-457

*Willst du mein Herz*

L. Leonard

D-20262

Ernst Wolff

CM-457

*Zu dir, Jehova.* Ernst Wolff

CM-457

## Suites:

## Ia. Clavier Suites, English

No. 2, A minor

W. Landowska, hpsd.

VM-447

H. Samuel, piano

V-9476/7

No. 3, G minor

4th mvt. (Sarabande), arr. orch.

Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski

VM-243

5th mvt. (Gavotte and Musette)

W. Landowska, hpsd.

V-1599

R. Tureck, piano

V-11924

6th mvt. (Gigue). R. Tureck, piano

V-11924

No. 5, E minor

Y. Pessl, hpsd.

VM-443

G. Copeland, piano

V-15183

No. 6, D major

Y. Pessl, hpsd.

VM-443

E. V. Wolff, hpsd.

MC-12

## Ib. Clavier Suites, French

No. 1, D minor. Sarabande only

A. Ehlers, hpsd.

D-61

No. 5, G major

4th mvt. (Gavotte). A. Ehlers, hpsd.

D-61

7th mvt. (Gigue). Myra Hess, piano

C-4084M

No. 6, E major

W. Landowska, hpsd.

V-14384

## Ic. Clavier Suites, miscellaneous

E minor, 3d mvt. (Allemande), arr.  
guitar

A. Segovia

V-7146

A major

Frenkel and E. V. Wolff

MC-3

## II. Orchestral Suites

## RECORD NO.

## Suites (Cont.):

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| No. 1, C major                           |          |
| Busch Chamber Players                    | VM-332   |
| No. 2, B minor                           |          |
| Busch Chamber Players                    | VM-332   |
| Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orch.,           |          |
| Mengelberg                               | CM-168   |
| Chicago Symphony Orch., Stock            | V-6914/5 |
| No. 3, D major                           |          |
| Busch Chamber Players                    | VM-339   |
| BBC Symphony Orch., Boult                | VM-214   |
| Paris Conservatory Orch., Wein-          |          |
| gartner                                  | CM-428   |
| 2d mvt. (the so-called "Air for the G    |          |
| String")                                 |          |
| All-American Orch., Stokowski            | CX-220   |
| Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski            | VM-40    |
| Arr. violin:                             |          |
| Mischa Elman                             | V-7103   |
| B. Hubermann                             | C-LX107  |
| Arr. 'cello                              |          |
| P. Casals                                | V-7368   |
| Arr. string quartet                      |          |
| Lener Quartet                            | C-DB1133 |
| Arr. organ                               |          |
| C. Courboin                              | V-14927  |
| No. 4, D major                           |          |
| Busch Chamber Players                    | VM-339   |
| Suite in G major arr. for orch. by Goos- |          |
| sens—6 parts taken from French           |          |
| Suites Nos. 3 and 5                      |          |
| London Symphony Orch., Goos-             |          |
| sens                                     | V-11427  |

## RECORD NO.

Toccatà in E minor for harpsichord

R. Serkin, piano

C-71594D

Toccatas &amp; Fugues, Clavier:

C minor (Peters IV, 5)

A. Schnabel, piano

VM-532

M. Maas, piano

CM-X<sub>4</sub>

D major (Peters IX, 3)

A. Schnabel, piano

VM-532

W. Landowska, hpsd.

V-15171/2

Y. Pessl, hpsd.

CM-X70

E minor (Peters IV, 3)

M. Maas, piano

CM-X<sub>4</sub>

Toccatas &amp; Fugues, Organ:

Toccatà, Adagio, & Fugue for Organ, C  
major (Peters III, 6)

C. Weinrich, organ

MC-37

Arr. orch. Minneapolis Symphony

Orch., Mitropoulos

M-X195

Arr. piano. A. Rubinstein

V-8895/6

Adagio only

Arr. orch. (misabeled "C minor").

Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski

VM-243

Arr. 'cello. P. Casals

V-6635

Arr. viola. L. Tertis

C-D1647

Toccatas &amp; Fugues for Organ

Vol. I—D minor (Peters IV, 4), F major,  
E major

Vol. II—Toccatà, Adagio, & Fugue in  
C major (same as entry above);  
"Dorian" Toccatà & Fugue in D  
minor

Carl Weinrich

MC-36/37

## RECORD NO.

## Toccatas &amp; Fugues, Organ (Cont.):

## Toccata &amp; Fugue, D minor (Peters IV, 4)

A. Schweitzer

CM-270

C. Weinrich

MC-36

E. Commette

C-69490D

Arr. orch.

Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski

V-8697

All-American Orch., Stokowski

CM-X219

Arr. piano

W. Christie on 2-keyboard piano

V-11219

## Toccata &amp; Fugue, F major (Peters III, 2)

Arr. orch.

London Symphony Orch., Coates

V-11468

## The Well-Tempered Clavier—two Books of 24

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Both Books rec. by Edwin Fischer (piano)

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piano

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Prelude & Fugue No. 1, C major. H.  
Samuel, piano

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P. & F. No. 2, C minor. H. Samuel,  
piano

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P. & F. No. 3, C-sharp major. Myra  
Hess, piano

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Tureck, piano

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The Well-Tempered Clavier (Cont.):

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
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| P. & F. No. 12, F minor. R. Tureck,<br>piano                             | V-11923 |
| Prelude No. 24, B minor, arr. orch.<br>Philadelphia Orch., Stokowski     | V-7316  |

The Wise Virgins, Ballet

Not composed by Bach in this form or under this title, but put together by William Walton from various Bach works as follows:

From Cantata No. 99 (*Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan*), Opening Chorus and *Herzlich tut mich verlangen*; from Cantata No. 85 (*Ich bin ein guter Hirt*), Air for tenor; from Cantata No. 26 (*Ach, wie flüchtig*), Opening Chorus; from Cantata No. 208 (*Was mir behagt*), *Sheep May Safely Graze*; from Cantata No. 129 (*Gelobet sei der Herr*), Choral Finale

Sadler's Wells Orch., Walton	VM-817
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## *The World That Bach Lived In*

More than almost any other composer, Johann Sebastian Bach lived apart from his world. It was a stirring period; significant events were happening in Europe and on our side of the Atlantic—but probably Bach was aware of few of them. Living out his life in the small German cities, never traveling far, he yet felt life rich enough if only he could compose and play. But it will be interesting to look at the world he was born into, and then—in the following pages—to notice what was going on in his lifetime.

Over here the New England colonies were growing—fighting the Indians, building schools, worshipping God in freedom. What had started as New Amsterdam was now New York, under the British Crown. William Penn had launched his colony and founded his city. Virginia flourished—especially “Tidewater” Virginia—under its House of Burgesses and its British Governor. No Colonial yet dreamed of independence.

In France this was the era of the Sun King, Louis XIV—a brilliant, extravagant, aristocratic regime that fostered the arts, oppressed the masses, and

sowed the seeds of the French Revolution a century later. There was much fine music: court concerts, operas, ceremonial Church music. Painters prospered, and elegant furniture was made; magnificent palaces were erected, beautiful gardens laid out. For court and nobility, life was easy and money was plentiful—what did the great families care about the small shopkeeper, the obscure villager, the downtrodden peasant? In France, the spirit of human liberty was not yet born.

But England during these years was making giant strides toward popular freedom, constitutional liberty, and the curbing of the royal power, years before any of these had even occurred to other peoples. The English had already given the Crown one sharp lesson, when Charles I was executed in 1649; and in 1688 they were to give it another, when—losing patience with James II's stupid tyranny—they drove him out, passed the Bill of Rights putting the power into the hands of the people, and called to the throne the royal cousins William and his wife Mary. The Bill of Rights—the Habeas Corpus Act—the Act of Toleration—Parliament's refusal to renew the law that censored printing—all of these great English milestones on the road to popular freedom were passed at the end of this century (when Bach was a

boy), and to them we Americans owe many of our free traditions and our rights as sovereign citizens.

As for Italy and Germany, neither was what we should call "a country" in the sense of a united nation. Each was merely a geographical expression—a group of large or small political units each ruled over by duke or prince or Elector, occasionally joining for a time to make war, but never permanently federated under a single ruler until the middle of the 19th century. Back and forth among these German and Italian courts traveled the musicians of Bach's day, directing the music in the churches, conducting ducal orchestras, producing opera at the behest of princes. The names of many of these musicians will appear in the Table that follows, giving you a sort of picture of Bach's contemporaries in his own field.

## THE WORLD THAT BACH LIVED IN

### J. S. BACH'S LIFE

1685 Born at Eisenach, March 21.

### MUSICAL EVENTS

1685 B., Domenico Scarlatti, and (on Feb. 23, 4 weeks before Bach) G. F. Händel. In England, Purcell made director of King's music. Corelli settles in Rome. The great Couperin becomes organist at St. Gervais in Paris.

1686 B., Porpora, celebrated Italian teacher and opera composer.

1687 D., Lully, Italian comp. living in Paris. B., Giuseppe Guarnieri, greatest of violin-making family.

1688 Father's twin, Johann Christoph, dies.

### WORLD EVENTS

1685 D., King Charles II, succeeded by James II. French Protestants compelled to flee, on Louis XIV's revocation of the Edict of Nantes tolerating them; great Huguenot emigration to England, Germany, America.

1686 King appts. tyrannical Andros as Governor of New England, N. Y., and N. J.

1687 D., Lasalle, explorer. In London the Royal Society pub. Newton's epoch-making *Principia*.

1688 D., Bunyan. B., Alexander Pope. In the English Revolution, wholly peaceful, James II is removed from throne, William and Mary succeed.

1689 Peter the Great succ. in Russia. Parliament passes English Bill of Rights and Act of Toleration (of dissenters).

1690 At Germantown (Pa.) William Rittenhouse builds the first paper mill in America.

- 1692 D., Vitali, pioneer composer of sonatas. B., Tartini, noted violinist and composer.
- 1693 Starts school at the Eisenach Gymnasium and sings in the Cur-rende Choir.
- 1694 Death of his mother.
- 1695 Death of his father, January. In February goes to Ohrdruf to live with Johann Christoph.
- 1696 Studies at Ohrdruf Lyceum and begins organ lessons.
- 1697 B., Leclair, famous violinist; Johann Quantz, flutist and composer.
- 1698 D., Pietro Guarneri of the violin-making family. B., the celebrated opera librettist Metastasio.
- 1699 B., Hasse, eminent German composer.
- 1692 B., G. B. Tiepolo, Venetian painter, and the famous English printer William Caslon.
- 1693 The N. E. clergyman Cotton Mather pub. his *Wonders of the Invisible World*. Also published, La Fontaine's *Fables* (Pt. III) and Locke's essay *On Education*.
- 1694 B., Voltaire, Lord Chesterfield. Bank of England chartered. French Academy pub. its influential *Dictionary*. Eng. Licensing Act expires, press is finally free.
- 1695 D., La Fontaine. Isaac Newton becomes Master of the Mint in the Tower of London.
- 1696 D., Mme. de Sévigné, John Sobieski of Poland. B., Gen. Oglethorpe.
- 1697 B., Hogarth, noted English artist.
- 1698 D., Frontenac, explorer. Peter the Great of Russia goes to England to learn shipbuilding.
- 1699 D., Racine, French dramatic poet.

## BACH'S LIFE

1700 With Erdmann, walks to Lüneburg, and there enters the choir of St. Michael's.

1701 Goes on with organ lessons and begins composing for the organ.

1702 Walks to Hamburg several times to hear Reinken play.

1703 In April engaged as viola-player in Duke Johann Ernst's orchestra at Weimar. In August apptd. org. of Bonifaciuskirche, Arnstadt.

1704 First cantata perf. at Easter in Arnstadt (called No. 15). Comp. *Capriccio on the Departure of a Brother* when Joh. Jakob leaves.

1705 On leave of absence, he goes to Lübeck to hear Buxtehude and overstays his leave.

## MUSICAL EVENTS

1701 J. Kuhnau becomes cantor at St. Thomas's, Leipzig. At 20 Telemann enters Leipzig University.

1702 Händel, at University of Halle, apptd. organist of cathedral there. At 17, D. Scarlatti begins composing operas at Naples.

1703 B., famous Italian singer Caffarelli. At 18 Händel joins opera orch. at Hamburg as violinist; meets Telemann and Mattheson.

1704 D., Johann von Biber, eminent violinist and a founder of the German school of violin-playing.

1705 B., Farinelli, greatest singer of his generation. At Hamburg, Händel produces his operas *Nero* and *Almira*.

## WORLD EVENTS

1700 D., Dryden, English poet, critic, dramatist. Charles XII of Sweden defeats Peter the Great at Narva.

1701 D., Hennepin, Capt. Kidd. W. Penn grants charter to Philadelphia. War of Spanish Succession opens.

1702 D., William III, succ. by Queen Anne. In N. E. the clergyman Cotton Mather publishes *Magnalia Christi Americana*.

1703 D., "The Man in the Iron Mask" in the Bastille. B., John Wesley, Jonathan Edwards. St. Petersburg founded by Peter the Great.

1704 Deerfield (Mass.) Massacre. Alex. Selkirk set ashore on Juan Fernandez Island. Battle of Blenheim. Spain loses Gibraltar to English.

1705 D., Emperor Leopold I, musical amateur and comp. In England, Thos. Newcomen invents his "fire engine," primitive steam engine for pumping.

- 1706 Leaves Lübeck without taking post offered by Buxtehude. Difficulties with Consistorium. In Nov. is reprimanded for letting Maria Barbara sing in the church.
- 1707 Takes position at Divi Blasii in Mühlhausen, June. In October marries Maria Barbara at Dornheim.
- 1708 Resigns at Mühlhausen (June) to go to Weimar as court organist to Duke Wilhelm Ernst. First child b. (daughter). Comp. many cantatas and most of his great organ works.
- 1709 His fame as an organist is growing. Visits Mühlhausen to inaugurate new organ there.
- 1710 Wilhelm Friedemann, eldest son, born at Weimar, Nov. 22.
- 1706 D., Johann Pachelbel, great predecessor of Bach. B., Galuppi, Venetian composer; Padre Martini, theorist, composer, teacher, of Bologna. Händel goes to Italy to stay for three years.
- 1707 D., Buxtehude, celebrated organist of Lübeck. In Italy, Vivaldi and Geminiani are composing and playing in court orchestras. At Weimar, Walther becomes town organist, later the Bachs' friend.
- 1708 D., Dr. John Blow, great English organist. B., Scheibe, comp. and org., Bach's enemy (see 1737). In Rome, Händel has friendly contest in organ-playing with D. Scarlatti. Telemann settles in Eisenach.
- 1709 B., F. X. Richter, composer of the "Mannheim school." Händel's opera *Agrippina* (Venice) makes him famous in Italy; meets Corelli, A. Scarlatti, Lotti.
- 1710 B., Dr. Thomas Arne, Wm. Boyce, Pergolesi, Paradisi. Händel pays his first visit to England.
- 1706 D., The Sieur d'Iberville, French explorer; John Evelyn, English diarist. B., Benj. Franklin; Baskerville, eminent English printer. Marlborough defeats the French at Ramillies.
- 1707 D., Aurangzebe, famous emperor of India. B., the naturalists Buffon and Linnaeus; Fielding (novelist); Carlo Goldoni (Italian dramatist). The Act of Union (England and Scotland) goes into effect.
- 1708 B., William Pitt the elder (Earl of Chatham). Marlborough and Eugene defeat the French at Oudenarde, and Lille surrenders.
- 1709 B., Dr. Saml. Johnson. A. Selkirk is rescued from his desert island. Peter the Great defeats Charles of Sweden at Poltawa. At the battle of Malplaquet, French defeated.

## BACH'S LIFE

## MUSICAL EVENTS

1711 Händel's first opera in England, *Rinaldo*, is produced at the Haymarket Theatre.

1712 Händel procures *Teseo* and *Il Pastor fido*. In Naples, N. Porpora opens his famous singing school.

1713 Visits Halle to test new organ of Liebfrauenkirche, but (1714) refuses to go there as organist.

1714 Carl Philipp Emanuel born. At Cassel, Bach plays for Prince Friedrich of Sweden.

1715 Johann Gottfried Bernhard b.

## WORLD EVENTS

1711 D., Boileau, French critic and poet. B., Hume, Scottish philosopher and historian. A. Pope pub. *Essay on Criticism*. Addison's *Spectator* begins publication.

1712 B., Frederick the Great; Rousseau, French author and composer. Alexander Pope's *Rape of the Lock* published.

1713 D., Fredk. I of Prussia, succ. by Fredk. Wm. I (father of Fredk. the Great). Peace of Utrecht ends War of Spanish Succession (giving Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and other parts of Canada to England).

1714 D., Queen Anne of England, succ. by George I of Hanover. Fahrenheit invents mercury thermometer. War between Venice and the Turks.

1715 D., Louis XIV of France. First Jacobite Rebellion in England (to restore Stuarts to throne) is suppressed. Pope's *Iliad* published.



- 1716 Goes on visit to Saxe-Weissenfels where his secular cantata *Was mir behagt* pleases Prince Leopold. He decides to give up Weimar post.
- 1717 At Dresden agrees to contest with Marchand, who leaves. Put under arrest for wanting to take Cöthen post; then allowed to resign.
- 1718 At Cöthen, starts chamber-music comp., writing works for his small court orchestra.
- 1719 Tries, but fails, to see Händel, who is visiting his birthplace at Halle.
- 1720 Begins Wilhelm Fr.'s *Clavierbüchlein*. In July, death of wife. On visit to Hamburg to hear Reinken, declines post of organist there.
- 1716 B., Giardini, violinist and comp. In Paris, François Couperin pub. his *Art of Playing the Clavectn.*
- 1717 B., J. W. Stamitz, German composer important as a creator of modern style of instrumental music. In London, Händel produces the *Water Music*.
- 1718 Johann Quantz joins King of Poland's orch., begins studying and comp. for flute. Händel is apptd. organist and composer to Duke of Chandos.
- 1719 B., Leopold Mozart (Wolfgang's father); J. C. Altnikol (Bach's pupil and son-in-law). King George I founds Royal Academy of Music, London.
- 1720 Händel's *Esther* (first great Eng. oratorio) and *Chandos Te Deum*. Bononcini and Ariosti, Italian comps., come to London, and the Händel-Bononcini rivalry begins.
- 1716 D., Leibniz, philosopher; Wycherley, dramatist. B., Thomas Gray, poet. Wren's rebuilding of St. Paul's, London, completed.
- 1717 B., the actor Garrick, H. Walpole, Maria Theresa (Austrian empress). In Paris, John Law organizes his disastrous "Mississippi Scheme."
- 1718 D., "Blackbeard" (pirate), Wm. Penn. B., Gen. Israel Putnam, Thomas Chippendale (English cabinet-maker).
- 1719 D., the poet Addison; Flamsteed, (Astronomer Royal). Defoe publishes *Robinson Crusoe*
- 1720 B., Indian chief Pontiac; Charles Edward Stuart ("Bonnie Prince Charlie"—see 1745). Mississippi Scheme collapses, bringing inflation and disaster in England and France.

## BACH'S LIFE

1721 Comp. and delivers Brandenburg Concertos to the Margrave in March. In Dec. marries Anna Magdalena Wülfen.

1722 Composes part of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*. Applies for Thomaskirche post at Leipzig; Telemann is appointed but declines, and it is given to Bach.

1723 In May signs agreement with Leipzig Council; formally inducted on June 1 as Thomaskirche organist and head of Thomasschule.

1724 Begins efforts to improve school conditions. Writes many cantatas for the St. Thomas choir.

1725 Composes Anna Magdalena's *Notebook*, and many more cantatas.

## MUSICAL EVENTS

1721 B., Kirnberger, comp. and writer on theory. Telemann appointed music director at Hamburg. In London, Händel produces opera *Floridante*.

1722 D., Reinken, org. and comp.; and Kuhnau, Bach's predecessor at St. Thomas's. B., Nardini, noted violinist. Farnelli's debut at Rome. Rameau publishes his important *Treatise on Harmony*.

1723 Rameau, settled in Paris, soon recognized as foremost French organist. In London, Händel prod. *Ottone, Giulio Cesare, Flavio*.

1724 D., Theile, "father of counterpoint," teacher of Buxtehude and Hasse. Caffarelli's debut in Rome.

1725 D., A. Scarlatti. B., Karl Fr. Abel, viola da gamba virtuoso, friend of J. C. Bach in London.

## WORLD EVENTS

1721 D., Elihu Yale, Watteau. B., Smollett, Roger Sherman. In Boston, first inoculation against smallpox in America, by Dr. Boylston.

1722 D., Duke of Marlborough. B., Gen. Burgoyne, Comte de Grasse, Saml. Adams. Defoe publishes *Journal of the Plague Year* and *Moll Flanders*.

1723 D., Christopher Wren, greatest English architect; Increase Mather. B., Blackstone, John Witherspoon, Adam Smith, Sir Joshua Reynolds. At 17, Franklin leaves Boston home to live in Philadelphia.

1724 B., Klopstock, poet; Kant, philosopher; Sir Guy Carleton, British governor of Quebec and commander of the British forces in Canada, 1775-77.

1725 D., Peter the Great. B., Rochambeau, James Otis, Baron Clive of Plassey, Greuze, Casanova.

- 1726 Begins engraving and issuing the Partitas to form the first volume of the *Clavierübung* (see 1731).
- 1727 Visits Hamburg. His funeral ode for the Electress of Saxony is performed.
- 1728 On Good Friday, April 15, first performance of the *St. Matthew Passion*. Bach quarrels with the Municipal Council.
- 1729 Is apptd. honorary Kapellmeister to Weissenfels court. Quarrels with the Council continue, particularly with Ernesti. Latter dies, to be replaced by Gesner.
- 1731 *St. Mark's Passion* perf. on Good Friday. Engraves and pub. Pt. I of *Clavierübung* (six Partitas).
- 1736 B., Dr. Charles Burney, English musical historian and father of Fanny Burney. Händel naturalized British citizen.
- 1727 D., Wm. Croft, Westminster Abbey org.; Gasparini, Ital. teacher. Daquin, after competing with Rameau, becomes organist of St. Paul's, Paris. Händel composes anthem for coronation of George II.
- 1728 D., Prince Leopold, Bach's patron. B., Piccinni, opera comp. who was Gluck's rival in Paris; Hiller, originator of the *Singspiel*; Johann A. Stein, noted organ-builder and early maker of pianos. *Beggar's Opera* produced in London.
- 1729 B., Monsigny, a creator of French opéra-comique; Sarti, Venetian director and comp. of opera; Antonio Soler, fine Spanish composer. Porpora, brought to London by anti-Händelians, is unable to challenge Händel's supremacy.
- 1731 D., Cristofori, famous Italian harpsichord maker. B., Christian Cannabich of the Mannheim School.
- 1726 Voltaire exiled to England for 3 years. Swift publishes *Gulliver's Travels*.
- 1727 D., King George I, Isaac Newton. B., Gainsborough, Robt. Rogers of the Rangers, John Wilkes. Franklin founds the "Junto" discussion club in Philadelphia.
- 1728 D., Cotton Mather. B., Capt. James Cook, Goldsmith, Robt. Adam (Eng. architect). Bering makes 1st passage, Pacific to Arctic, through strait named for him. Pope's *Dunclad* and Ephraim Chambers' *Cyclopaedia* published.
- 1729 D., Congreve, Steele. B., Bougainville (French navigator), E. Burke, Catherine II of Russia, Lessing, Saml. Seabury (1st P. E. bishop in America), Moses Mendelssohn (eminent German philosopher, grandfather of Felix).
- 1731 B., Wm. Cowper, Erasmus Darwin. In Phila., Franklin founds the first public library in America.

## BACH'S LIFE

1732 Thomasschule enlarged and renovated; cantata *Froher Tag* perf. at opening. Bach visits Cappel to examine organ.

1733 On visit to Dresden, presents Augustus III with *Kyrie* and *Gloria* of B-minor Mass, petitions for title of court composer. Wilhelm Friedemann appointed organist of Sophienkirche in Dresden.

1734 First performance of the *Christmas Oratorio*. Gesner is replaced by the younger Ernesti, who renounces Bach's difficulties.

1735 Resumes composing for organ, publishes Pt. II of *Clavierübung* (*Italian Concerto* and B-minor Partita). Johann Christian b. (the "London Bach").

1736 Appntd. court composer to Augustus III of Saxony. Plays new organ of Frauenkirche, Dresden. Comp. *Goldberg Variations*.

## MUSICAL EVENTS

1732 B., Haydn, Kittel (last pupil of Bach), Broadwood (English mfr. of pianos). Disgraced, Bononcini leaves London to live in Paris.

1733 D., Couperin le Grand. At Naples Pergolesi prod. *La Serva padrona*. Händel's oratorios *Albani* and *Deborah*. His war with the "Opera of the Nobility" (led by Porpora) threatens his operatic prestige.

1734 B., Gossec, celebrated French comp. Farinelli goes to London to sing, joins Händel's enemies, helps to bring on the operatic defeat of Händel.

1735 Händel prod. operas *Ariodante* and *Alcina*. Pergolesi produces opera *Olimpiade* at Rome.

1736 D., Pergolesi at 26, after finishing *Siabot Mater*, his finest work. At 22 Gluck enters service of Prince Lobkowitz in Vienna, as chamber musician.

## WORLD EVENTS

1732 B., Washington, Richard Henry Lee, D. Rittenhouse, Lord North, Warren Hastings. Franklin starts *Poor Richard's Almanack* (annual publication).

1733 D., Augustus II of Saxony, succ. by Augustus III. B., Priestley, Wieland. Oglethorpe colonizes Georgia. Pope's *Essay on Man* and Voltaire's *English Letters* pub.

1734 D., Rob Roy. B., Robt. Morris, D. Boone. In NYC, trial of Peter Zenger, newspaper pub. accused of libel; acquittal establishes freedom of press in America.

1735 B., John Adams and Paul Revere. Hogarth issues *Rake's Progress* drawings. Pub. of Prévost's *Manon Lescaut* and Pope's *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*.

1736 D., Prince Eugene of Savoy, ally of Duke of Marlborough against France. B., James Watt (inv. of steam engine), Patrick Henry. Voltaire produces tragedy *Alzire*.

- 1737 Is attacked in a series of articles in Scheibe's periodical *Der critische Musikus*.
- 1737 D., Montéclair, A. Stradivari. Rameau produces his masterpiece, *Castor et Pollux*. Händel has a breakdown and goes to Aix-la-Chapelle for a rest.
- 1737 B., Galvani (physicist), Gibbon, Thomas Paine, Francis Hopkinson, John Hancock. Richmond (Va.) is laid out by Wm. Byrd of Westover. Cruden's *Concordance* published.
- 1738 Church quarrel is settled by Augustus. Carl Ph. Emanuel goes to Prussia as court cembalist.
- 1738 Arne comp. music for Milton's masque *Comus*. Händel produces *Serse* (containing the "Largo").
- 1738 B., Ethan Allen, Gen. Cornwallis, George III. John Wesley starts Methodist movement. College of N. J. opens at Princeton, N. J.
- 1739 Bach takes Kirmberger as pupil. Pub. *Clavierübung*, Pt. III, containing chorale arrangements.
- 1739 Dick Turpin (highwayman) hanged. B., Wm. Bartram, American botanist. War opens between England and Spain.
- 1740 This year and the next, Bach has increasing trouble with his eyesight, but keeps on composing.
- 1740 Maria Theresa becomes Empress at Vienna. Fredk. the Great succ. as King of Prussia. Richardson's novel *Pamela* pub. Whitefield's first preaching tour in America.
- 1740 D., Lotti, Ariosti. Frederick the Great retains C. P. E. Bach and J. Quantz as court musicians. Arne's music for masque *Alfred* contains "Rule, Britannia."
- 1741 D., Vivaldi. B., André Grétry. Händel's last opera, *Deidamia*. Gluck's first opera, *Artaserse*.
- 1741 B., Benedict Arnold, Dr. Joseph Warren. War of Austrian Succession opens, challenging Maria Th.
- 1742 Pub. of Pt. IV of *Clavierübung*; the *Goldberg Variations*.
- 1742 In Dublin, first perf. of Händel's oratorio *Messiah*. Gluck's operas *Demetrio* in Venice, *Demofonte* in Rome.
- 1742 Franklin's library is chartered as Library Company of Phila. Pub. of Young's *Night Thoughts* and Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*.

## BACH'S LIFE

### MUSICAL EVENTS

1743 B., Boccherini, L. Agujari (noted soprano). At first London perf. of *Messiah*; the King rises for the Hallelujah Chorus. Gluck brings out opera *Tigrane* in Italy.

1744 Finishes and pub. Bk. II of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*.

1744 D., Leonardo Leo. B., Pacchiarotti, famous male soprano. Händel produces oratorios *Samson*, *Semele*, *Joseph*; and composes the *Dettingen Te Deum*.

1745 Scheibe retracts his attack on Bach in the musical magazine.

1745 D., Giuseppe Guarneri, most celebrated of violin-making family. Gluck prod. *Ippolito* in Milan; visits London with Prince Lobkowitz. Händel prod. oratorios *Belshazzar* and *Hercules*. Rousseau's opera *Les Muses galantes* is given privately in Paris.

### WORLD EVENTS

1743 B., Jefferson, Marat, Cagliostro, Stephen Austin (of Texas), Meyer Rothschild (founder of financial dynasty). Franklin's "Junto" becomes Amer. Philosophical Society. Pope's *Dunclad* published.

1744 D., Alexander Pope. B., Josiah Quincy, Abigail Adams, Lamarck. "King George's War" in colonies is extension of War of Austrian Succession in Europe.

1745 D., Jonathan Swift, Sir Robert Walpole. B., Anthony Wayne, John Jay, Dr. Benj. Rush, Volta. In Scotland the Jacobite Rebellion aims at restoring Stuarts ("Bonnie Prince Charlie") to English throne. Yale College chartered. Dr. Johnson issues proposals for a new edition of Shakespeare.

1746 B., Karl Stamitz (son of J. W.), comp. and virtuoso on violin, viola, viola d'amore; Wm. Billings, America's earliest important composer. Gluck gives a concert in London with Händel.

1746 B., Pestalozzi, Kosciuszko, Goya, Toussaint l'Ouverture. Jacobite Rebellion finally crushed at Battle of Culloden. Pub. of *Odes* by Wm. Collins. Franklin begins his experiments with electricity.

1747 With Wilhelm Friedemann he goes to Berlin to visit Carl Philipp Emanuel, and plays before Fredk. the Great, for whom (on his return to Leipzig) he composes the *Musical Offering* on the King's theme.

1748 Begins comp. *Art of the Fugue*.

1749 Though virtually blind he goes on with *Art of the Fugue*. Daughter Elisabeth marries Altnikol.

1747 B., Tourte, famous maker of violin bows. Händel's *Judas Macabeus* is prod. in London. Paris has "Opera War" between partisans of Italian and of French opera.

1748 D., J. G. Walther, Bach's friend. B., Neefe, org. and comp. who at Bonn taught the young Beethoven; E. Schikaneder, librettist of *The Magic Flute* (Mozart). Händel's oratorio *Joshua* and Gluck's *La Semiramide riconosciuta*.

1749 B., Da Ponte, librettist for Mozart; Forkel (1st biographer of Bach); Cimarosa, Jean Louis Duport, Abt Vogler. Jommelli becomes maestro at St. Peter's in Rome. Händel prod. the oratorio *Solomon*, and his *Firework Music* is played at Vauxhall Gardens.

1750 D., Veracini. B., John Stafford Smith, comp. of tune used by Key for *Star-Spangled Banner*; Salieri, teacher of Beethoven, Schubert, Liszt; Yriarte, Spanish musician and poet. Händel's *Theodora*, *The Choice of Hercules*, and *Alceste* (oratorios).

1747 B., John Paul Jones, L. Bréguet (noted Fr. watchmaker), Bürger (romantic ballad-writer). Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe*, Voltaire's *Zadig*, Samuel Johnson's *Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language*.

1748 D., Isaac Watts, James Thomson. B., Pulaski, Jeremy Bentham. The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle closes War of Austrian Succession; many territorial changes in Europe and America. Ohio Company formed.

1749 B., Goethe, Dr. Edw. Jenner (1st to vaccinate), Laplace, Mirabeau, Alfieri (Italian dramatist). Pub. of Fielding's *Tom Jones*, Buffon's *Natural History*, Johnson's *Vanity of Human Wishes*. Swedenborg begins publication of his theological works. Chippendale estab. his furniture factory in London.

1750 B., Stephen Girard; Caroline Herschel, astronomer; Isaiah Thomas, Amer. printer. Voltaire begins his three-year visit to Fredk. the Great at Potsdam. Dr. Johnson starts pub. of *The Rambler*.





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